BLUE

Kayako Kirishima and Masami Endô are about to discover that their recent friendship is turning into obsessive love. But when today's hopes and yesterday's dreams meet tomorrow's problems, will they be able to continue? With clear outline and confused feelings, Kiriko Nananan demonstrates that it is possible to make a Blue manga from black and white.

SAKKA 作家

BLUE

Kiriko Nananan

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ATTENTION !

THIS BOOK WAS PUBLISHED IN IT'S ORIGINAL JAPANESE FORM THEREFORE SHOULD BE READ FROM RIGHT TO LEFT.

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casterman

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ブルー

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BLUE

SUMMARY

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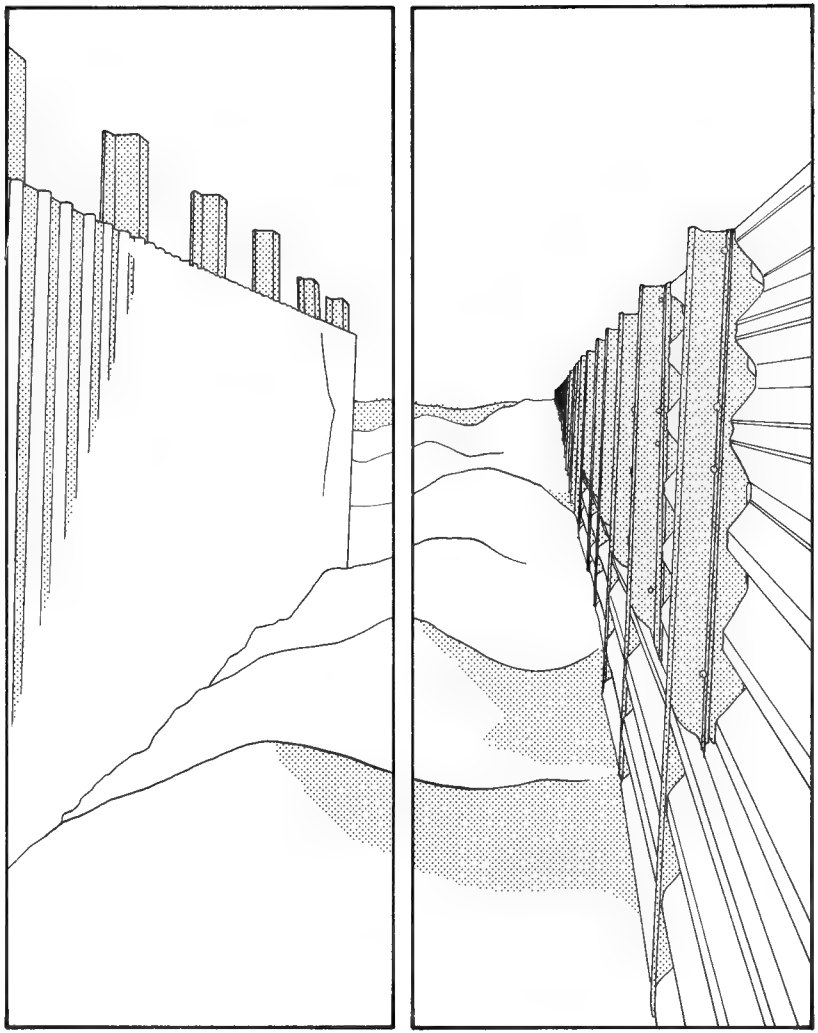
The immense sea and the sky above,
our umiforms, our clumsy adolescent enthusiasm...

If I had to choose a color for all of these
past things, I'd choose a deep blue.

Chapter 1

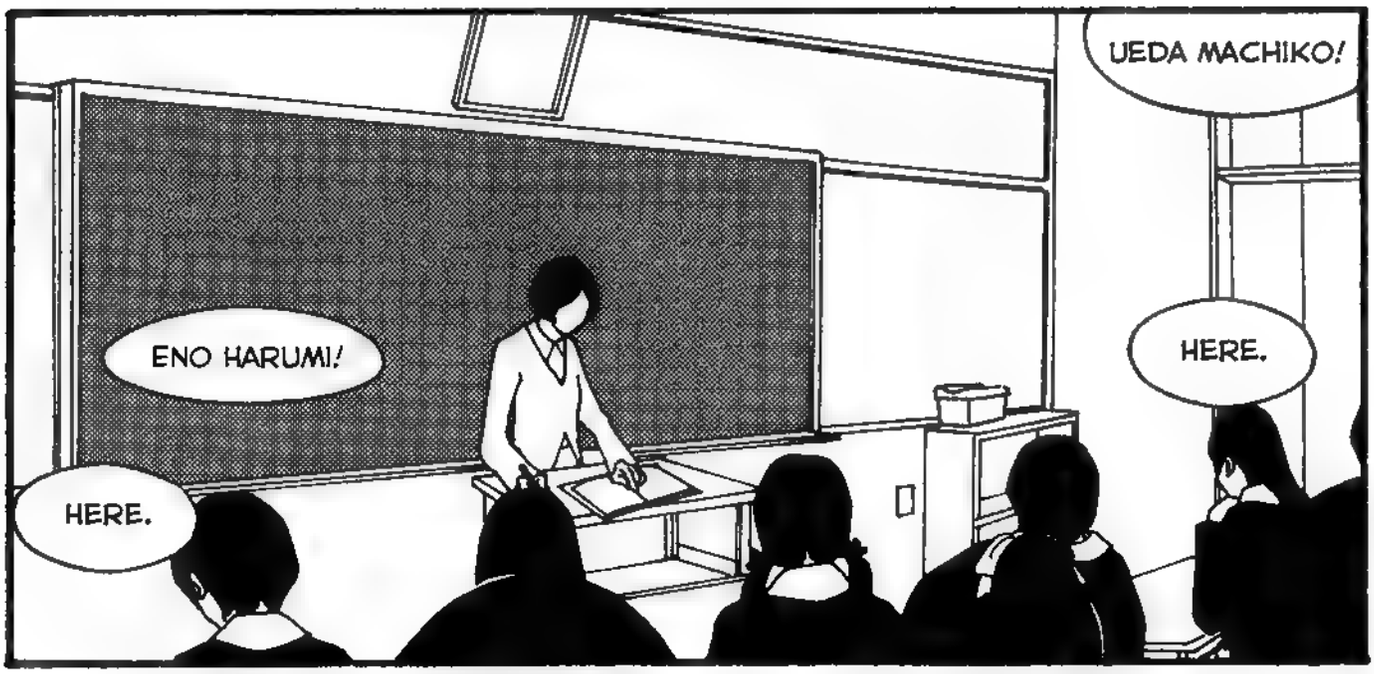
I'll show you a shortcut. Make sure you don't step on the small plants!



The sea's perfume...

From the top of this old school, we can catch a sight of the Sea of Japan across pines. On days with good weather, we can see islets in the distance that, from time to time, pierce the water's smooth surface.

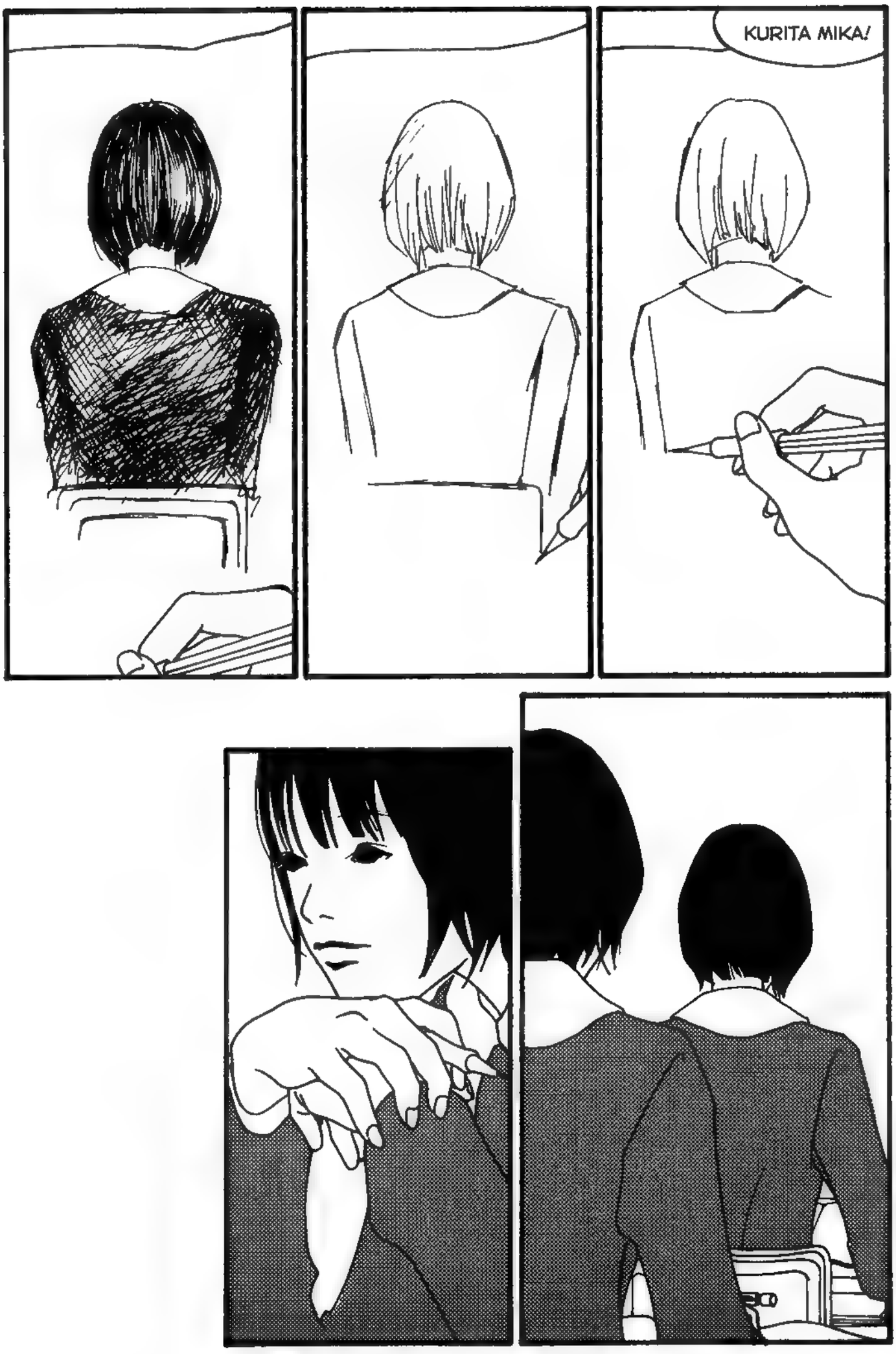
HARA YOKO!


UEDA MACHIKO!
ENO HARUMI!
HERE.
HERE.

HERE.

ENDO MASAMI!

KIRISHIMA KAYAKO!
HERE.


KURITA MIKA!

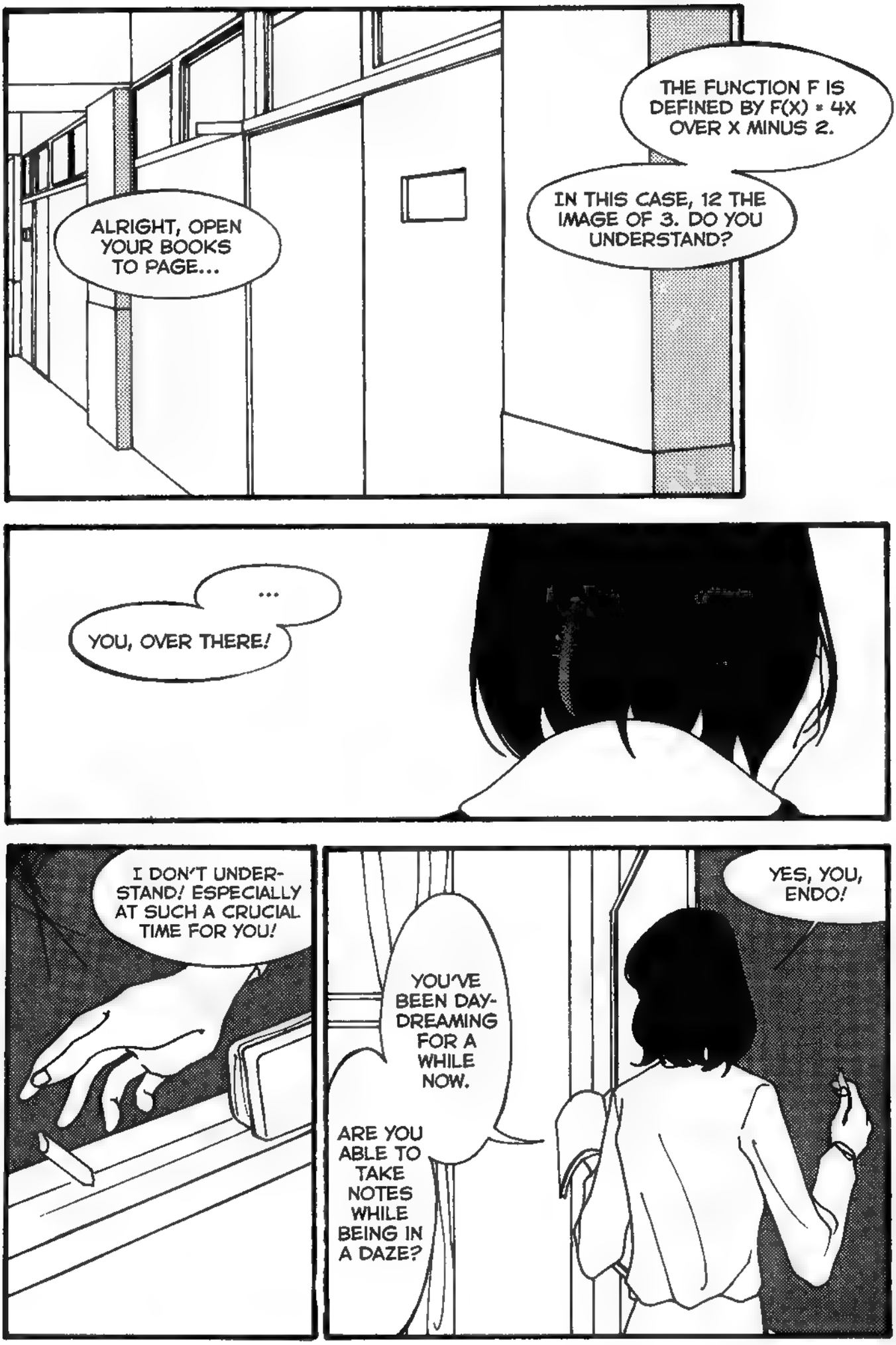
I'M STARVING! IT'S GETTING HARD TO CONCENTRATE!
END OF YEAR EXAMS ARE TOUGH, LOTS MORE THAN THE ONES AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR!
BY THE WAY, KAYAKO! YOU GOING TO THE PARTY WITH THE BOYS FROM MEINAN?
UH... I DON'T KNOW. I DON'T HAVE MUCH MONEY AT THE MOMENT.
HOW ABOUT YOU, WATANABE?
OF COURSE I'M GOING! COME ON, YOU SHOULD COME!
COME ON! AND THAT WAY, I COULD SLEEP AT YOUR PLACE AFTERWARDS!
THE GUYS FROM MEINAN ARE GREAT!
EVEN IF YOU'RE SHORT ON MONEY, IT'S STILL WELL WORTH IT.

SAY, THAT GIRL...
...
WHAT WAS HER NAME AGAIN? SHE WAS IN FRONT OF YOU IN CLASS.
IT'S DEFINITELY HER, RIGHT? LAST YEAR, THE FIRST-YEAR STUDENT THAT WAS COMPLETELY KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL?
YES, THAT'S IT!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT SHE DID...
ENDO?

That face...
It's always
attracted me.

I want to be
that girl's friend.

I'd like to come
here with Endo.


ALRIGHT, OPEN YOUR BOOKS TO PAGE...
THE FUNCTION F IS DEFINED BY F(X) = 4X OVER X MINUS 2.
IN THIS CASE, 12 THE IMAGE OF 3. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
...
YOU, OVER THERE!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND! ESPECIALLY AT SUCH A CRUCIAL TIME FOR YOU!
YES, YOU, ENDO!
YOU'VE BEEN DAYDREAMING FOR A WHILE NOW.
ARE YOU ABLE TO TAKE NOTES WHILE BEING IN A DAZE?

IF YOU DO NOT CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE, YOU HAVE NO HOPE OF EVER CATCHING UP FROM LAST YEAR'S ABSENCE!
I'VE WARNED YOU!
IN ANY CASE, DON'T DELAY THE CLASS.
EVERYONE IS MAKING AN EFFORT, YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO ISN'T FOLLOWING ALONG.
MOVING ON. OPEN YOUR BOOKS TO PAGE 232...
NUMBER 10.
CALM DOWN!
NUMBER 10. KIRISHIMA, PLEASE COME UP TO THE BOARD.

ALRIGHT... DOES ANYONE SEE THE MISTAKE?
WHAT'S WITH HER?
I'M SURE THAT YOU SEE IT.

WANNA GO TO MISDO*? YOU GOT SOME POINTS?
I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH YET. I'M TRYING TO SAVE UP FOR THE PICNIC BOX.
WHAT ELSE IS THERE?
DARN, NO MORE FRUIT PUNCH!

*Short for Mister Donuts

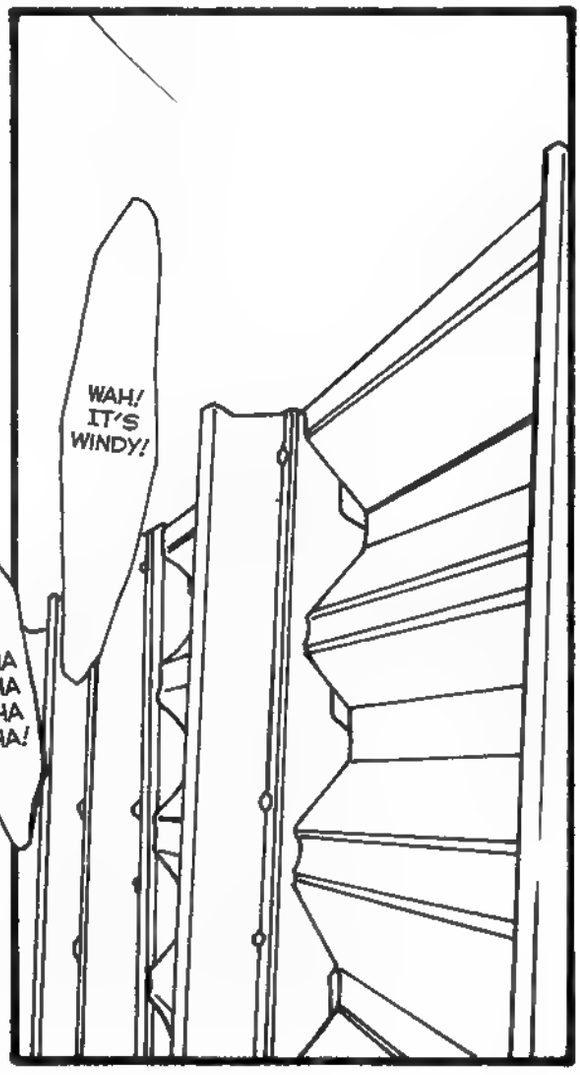
YEAH.
COME WITH US.
YES, COME.
THANKS. I'M COMING.
I'LL GO TELL THE GIRLS IN CLASS D.
YOU KNOW, ENDO, YOU USED TO SCARE ME A LITTLE.

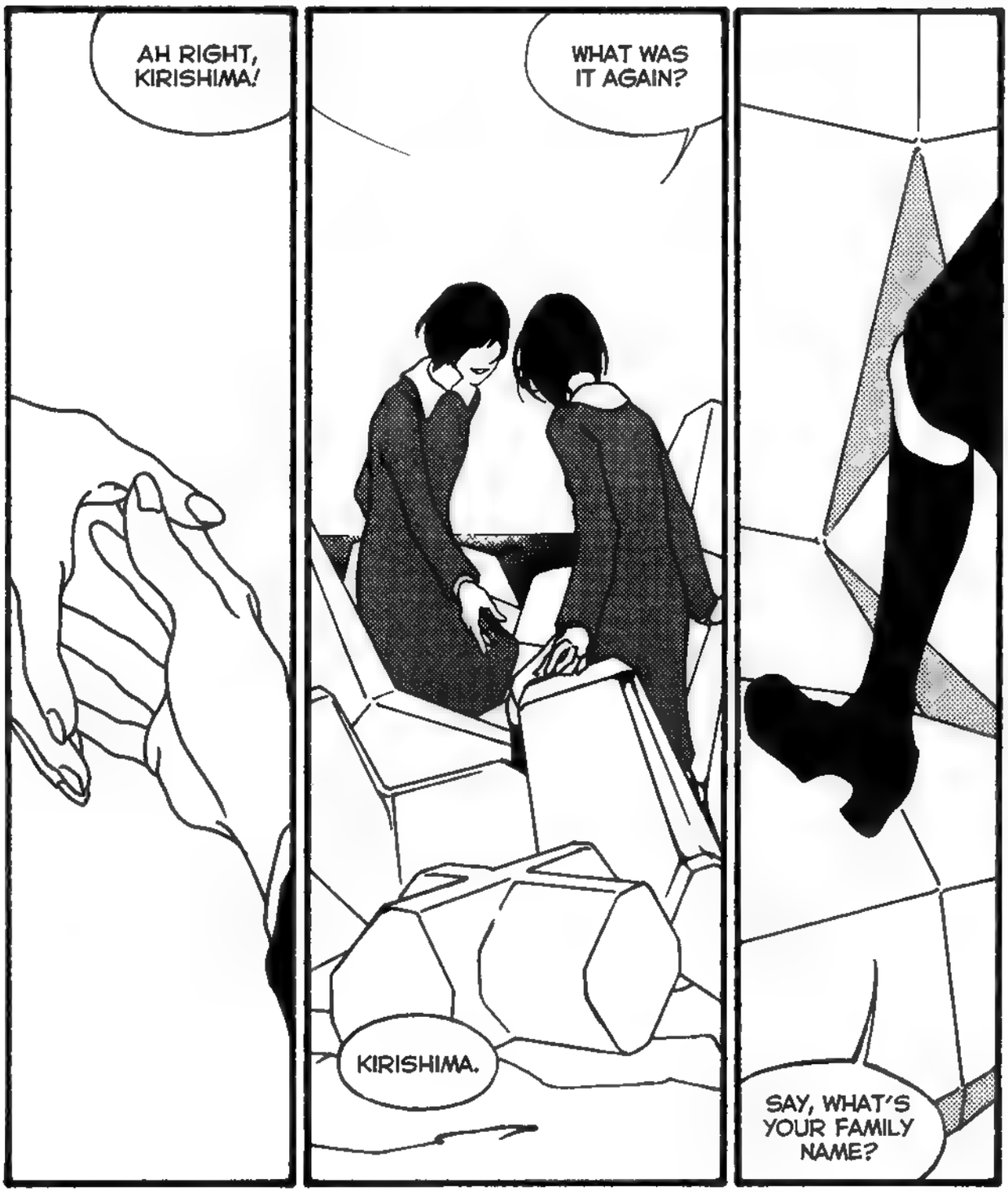
NO, I'M REALLY NOT...
YOU SEEM SO MATURE. I LIKE THAT, YOU KNOW.
THAT'S TRUE, YOU DON'T SMILE MUCH.
NO, RATHER THAN BEING SCARY, YOU IMPRESS ME WITH HOW CONFIDENT YOU ARE.
YEAH, THAT ONE'S AWFUL!
HOLD ON, I'M TALKING ABOUT A REAL PORT, THAT LIKE THE ONE BEHIND THE SCHOOL!
YOU'RE LIKE... A PORT THAT ATTRACTS SAILORS.
HAHA! WHAT IS THAT? AN OLD LOVE SONG FROM BEFORE THE WAR?
IF I WAS A MAN, I'D DEFINITELY DOCK!
NO, I'M FINE.
NO, THANK YOU.
WANT ME TO GET SOMETHING FOR YOU?
I'M STILL HUNGRY.
WANNA COME WITH ME TO THE BAKERY?
YES, YES!

UHH...
SORRY...
WE GOTTA HURRY, IT'S GOING TO CLOSE SOON.
I REALLY WANT A RED KIDNEY BEAN BUTTER BREAD.
ENDO...
HM?
OF COURSE!
WHY? IT WAS NICE.
COULD I EAT WITH YOU GIRLS TOMORROW?
OH YEAH?
YES. IT'S RATHER DESERTED, LIKE AN INDUSTRIAL ZONE. I FIND IT SUPERB.
THOSE GIRLS SAID IT SUCKED...
BUT YOU KNOW, THE SEA BEHIND THE SCHOOL IS PRETTY.

I'LL SHOW YOU A SHORT-CUT.
TODAY?
WHY NOT!
CAN YOU BRING ME?

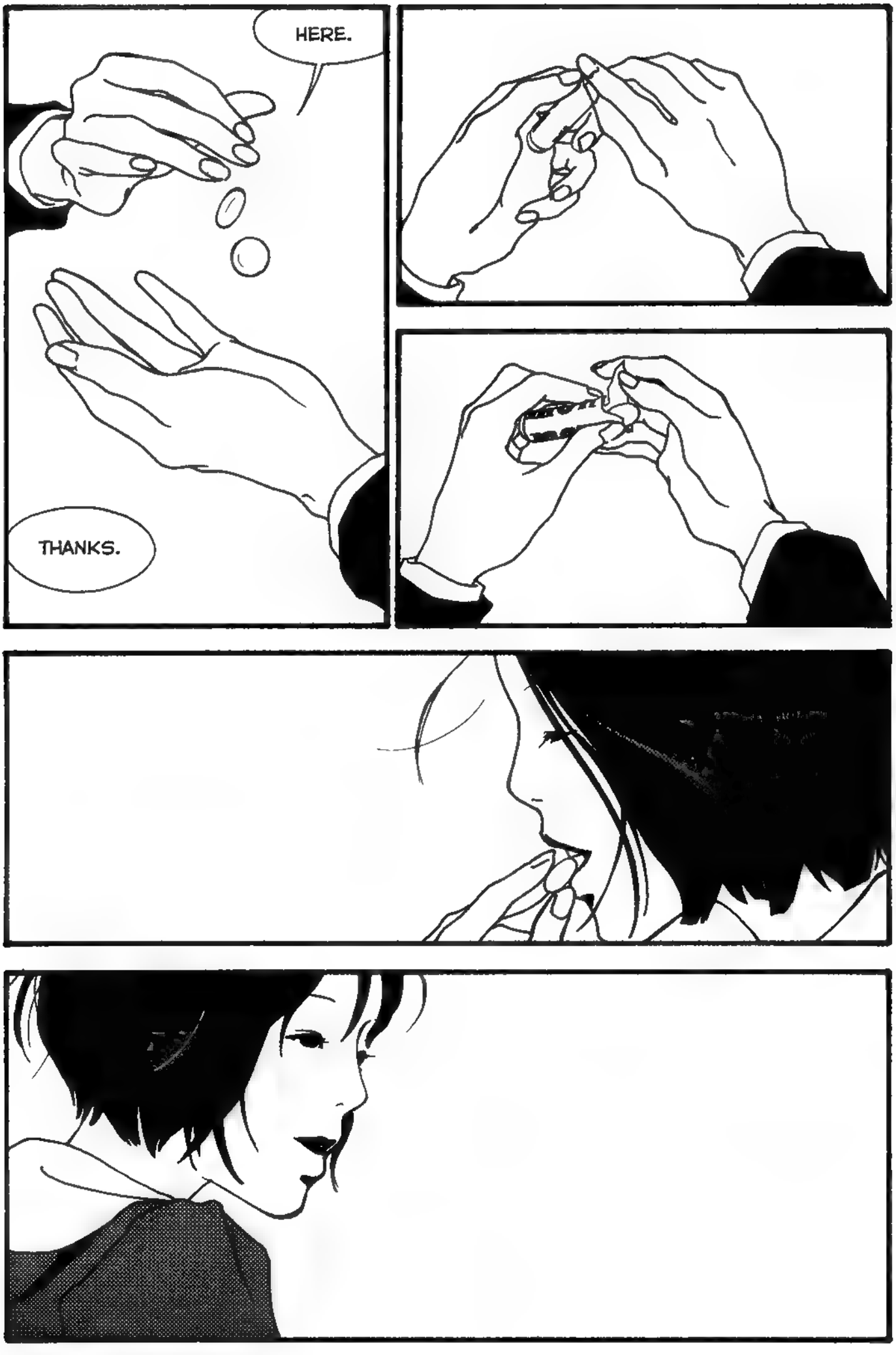
I'VE NEVER BEEN BY HERE BEFORE.
I LOOK AT THE BEACH FROM THE SCHOOL GROUND OFTEN, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO GET HERE.
THIS IS GREAT!

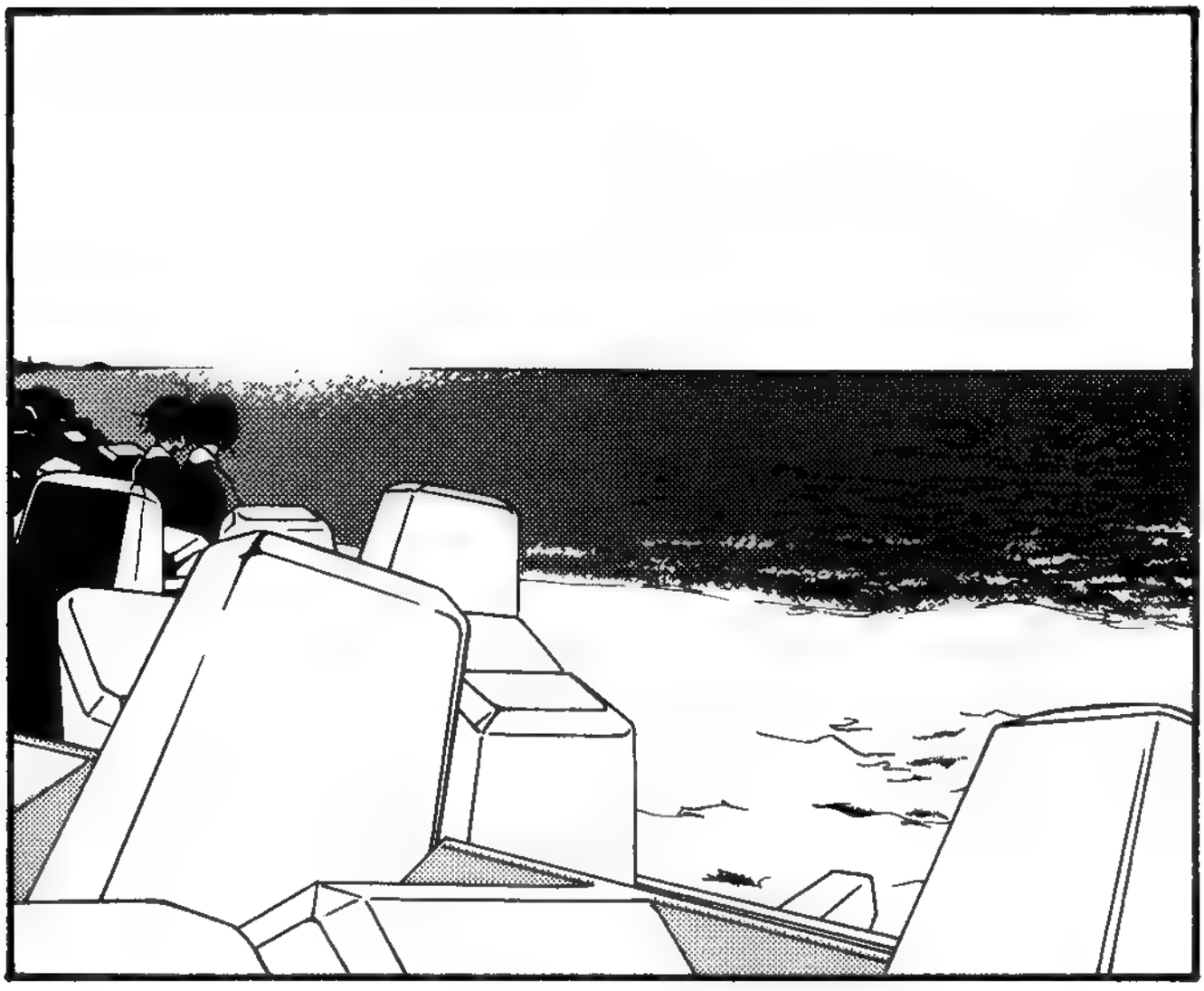

WAH! IT'S WINDY!
HA HA HA HA!


AH RIGHT, KIRISHIMA!
WHAT WAS IT AGAIN?
KIRISHIMA.
SAY, WHAT'S YOUR FAMILY NAME?

HAAAAA...
I WANT A CIGARETTE.
I HAVE CANDIES IF YOU WANT.
THANKS.
SAY, KIRISHIMA...

YOU MADE A MISTAKE ON PURPOSE, AM I RIGHT?
...EARLIER TODAY IN MATH.
DURING THE TIME WE WORK, I ALWAYS HEAR YOU WRITING VERY FAST...
YOU ALWAYS HAVE THE RIGHT ANSWERS!
I TELL YOU THAT, BUT REALLY, IT'S NOT IMPOR-TANT...
HM.
I'M SURE OF IT.


HERE.
THANKS.



We chatted until
sundown.

I found Endo so pretty.
The shape of her eyes,
the lining of her teeth.

Her breath, like mine,
smelled like mint.

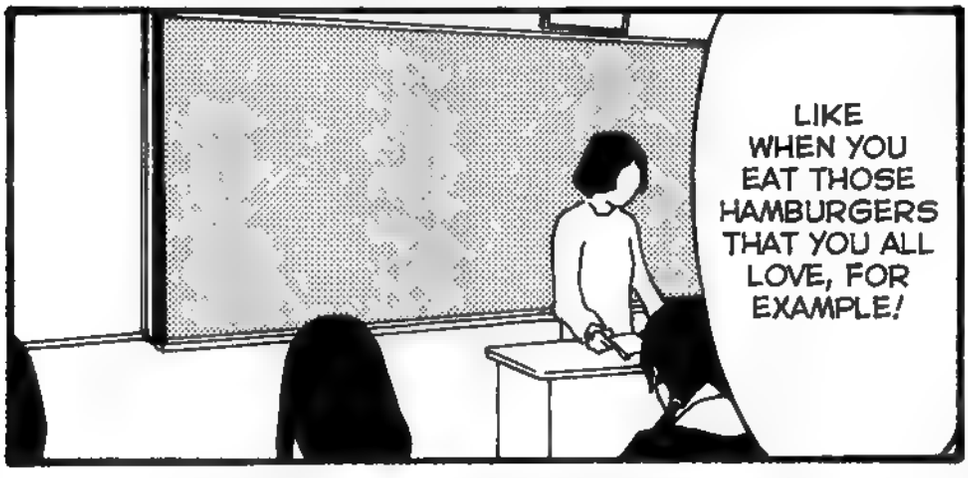
I was feeling good.
Happy to feel like I was
starting to like Endo.

Chapter 2

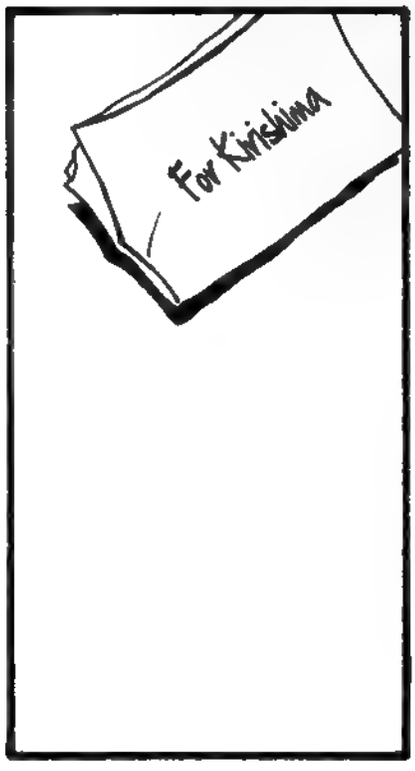
EH? WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ENDO? ARE YOU NUTS?
KIRISHIMA! YOU'RE THE ONE WHO STARTED IT!
HEEEY!
HA HA HA HA HA!
HELLO! WE'RE ON CLASS DUTY FOR CLASS 3C,
IS THERE ANYTHING LEFT TO PREPARE ON THE FIFTH FLOOR?
HI HI HI!
SHHH! PIPE DOWN!
CLASS 3C?
IF EVERYONE BROUGHT THEIR CALCULATOR...
THEN THERE'S NOTHING SPECIAL TO DO.

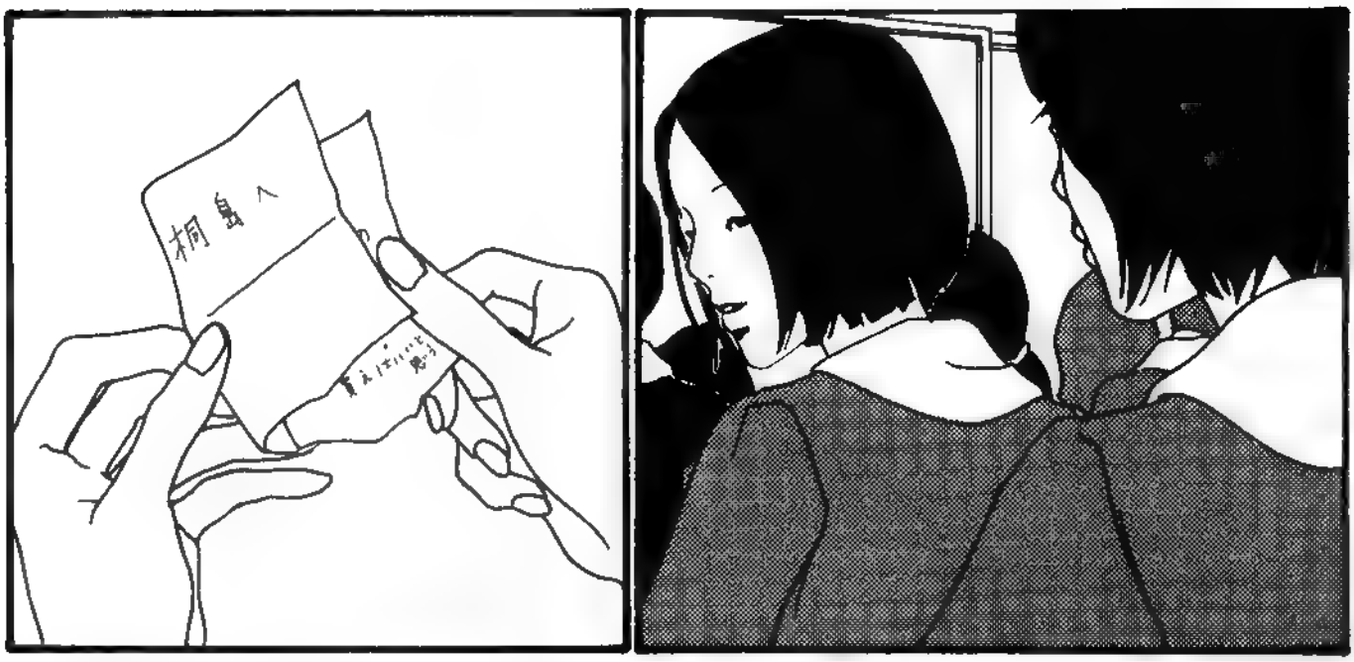
WHAT'S SO FUNNY?
I HEARD YOU LAUGHING OUTSIDE.
UH, NOTHING...
HUH? WHAT?
I WAS LOOK-ING FOR YOU!
AH, THERE YOU ARE, ENDO!
IT'S MY FAULT. I DROPPED IT AND IT NICKED UP...
IT WAS STUPID!
GREAT!
HERE! I TALKED TO YOU ABOUT IT THE OTHER DAY.
THE SECOND SONG SKIPS A LITTLE, THOUGH...

WHEN MY BROTHER FINDS OUT... I BETTER NOT BE AROUND.
YOUR BROTHER'S NOT A NICE GUY.
EVEN IF HE WAS, I'D BE IN TROUBLE.
YEAH, OBVIOUSLY.

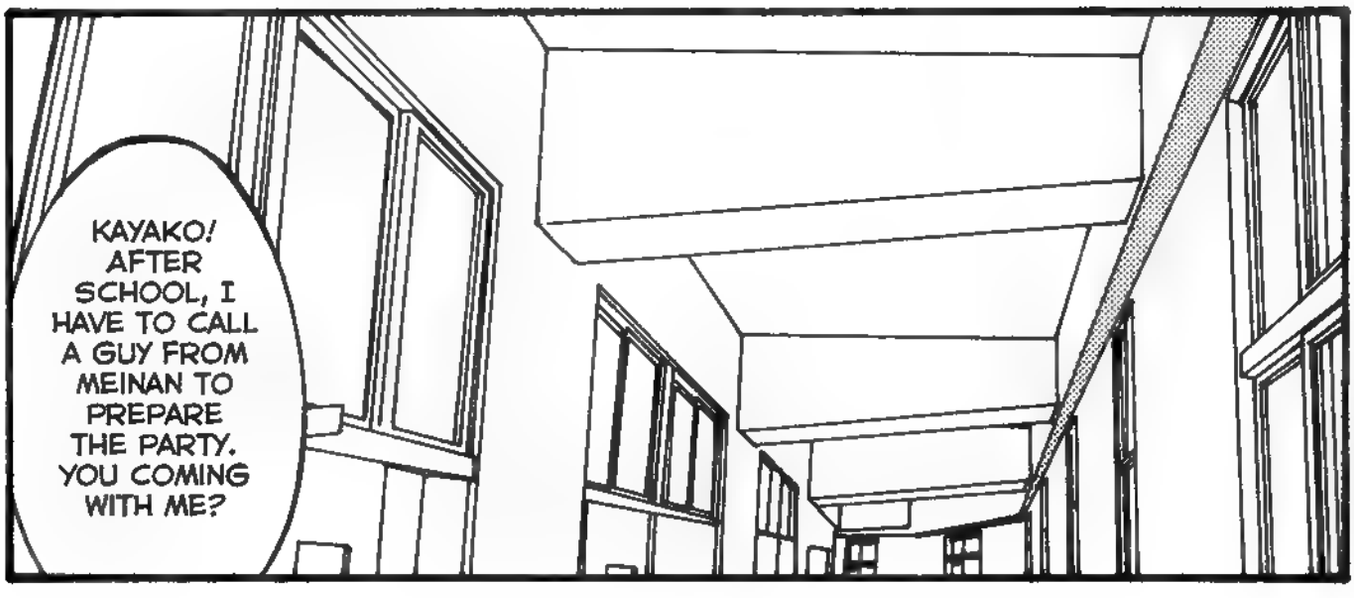

LIKE WHEN YOU EAT THOSE HAMBURGERS THAT YOU ALL LOVE, FOR EXAMPLE!

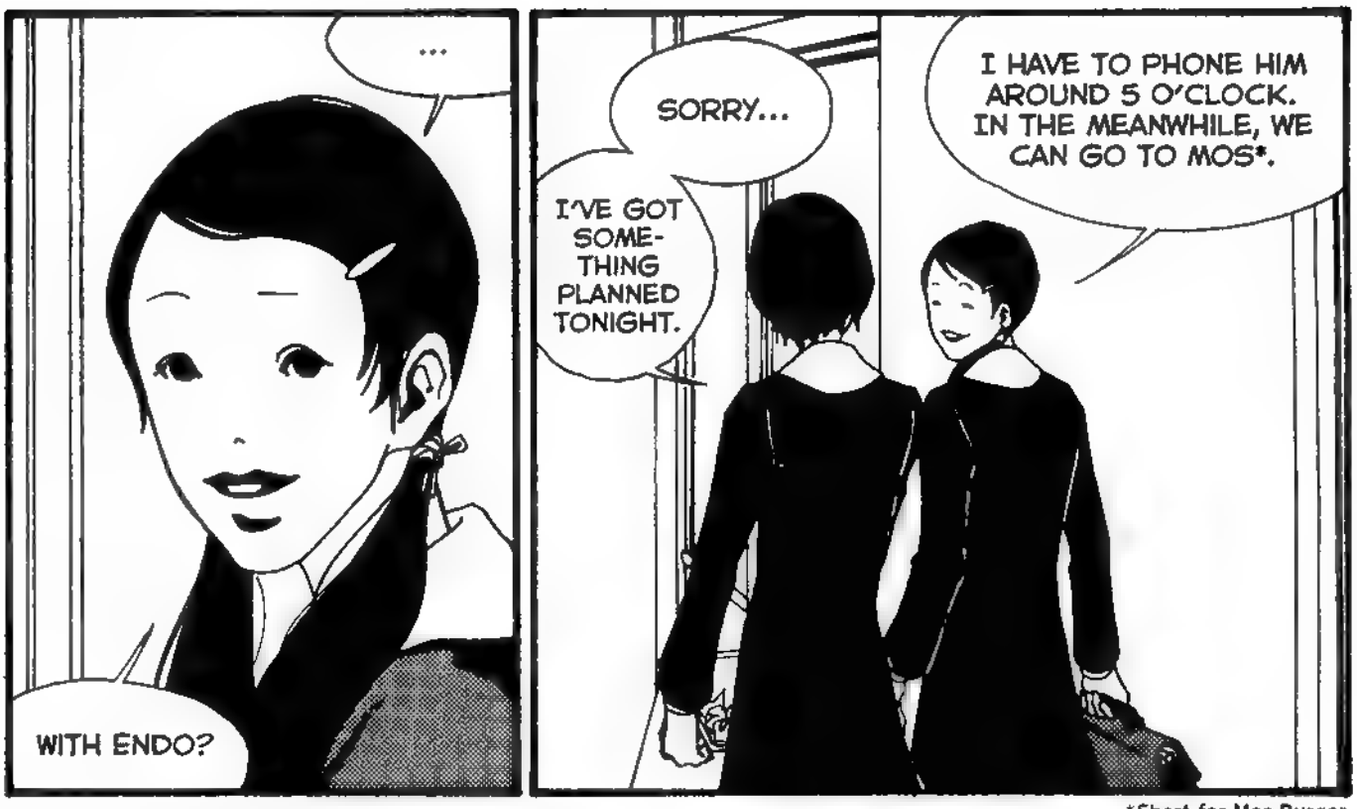
AS YOU CAN SEE, NUTRI-TION AND ENERGY. IT'S DIF-FERENT.


For Kirishima

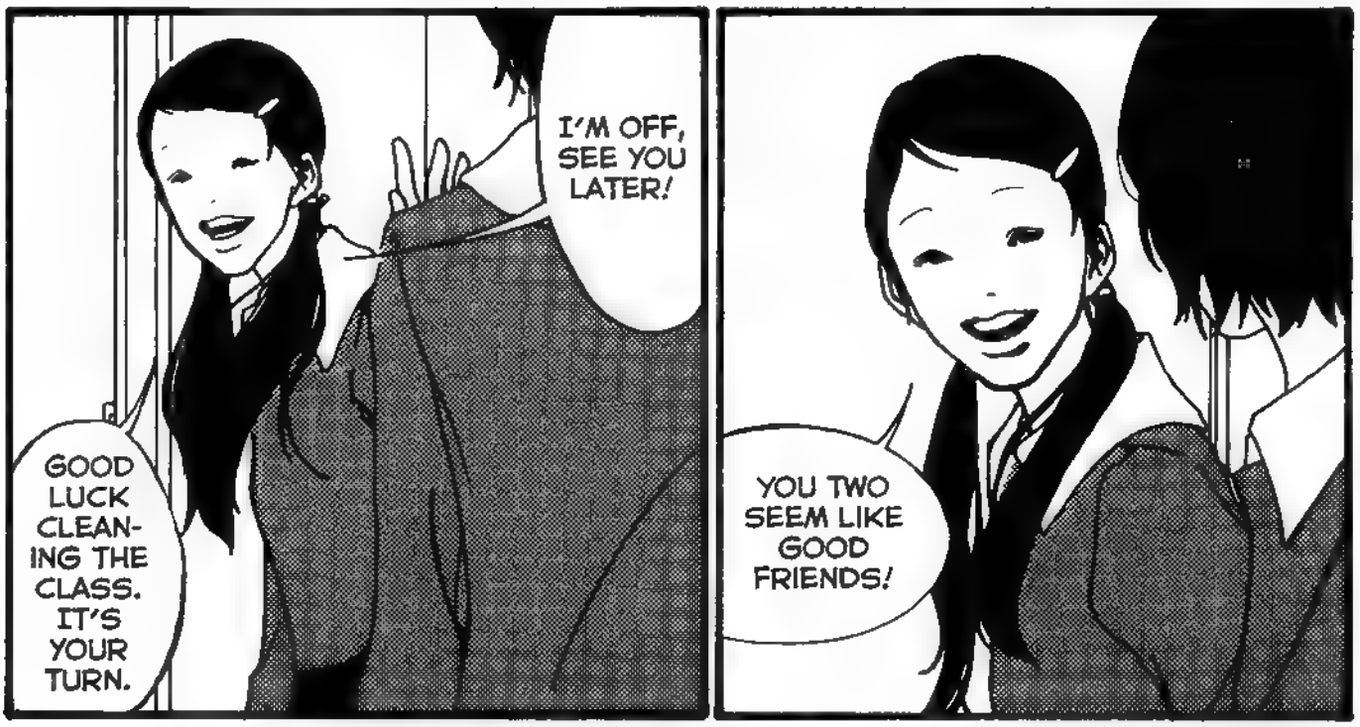

桐島へ

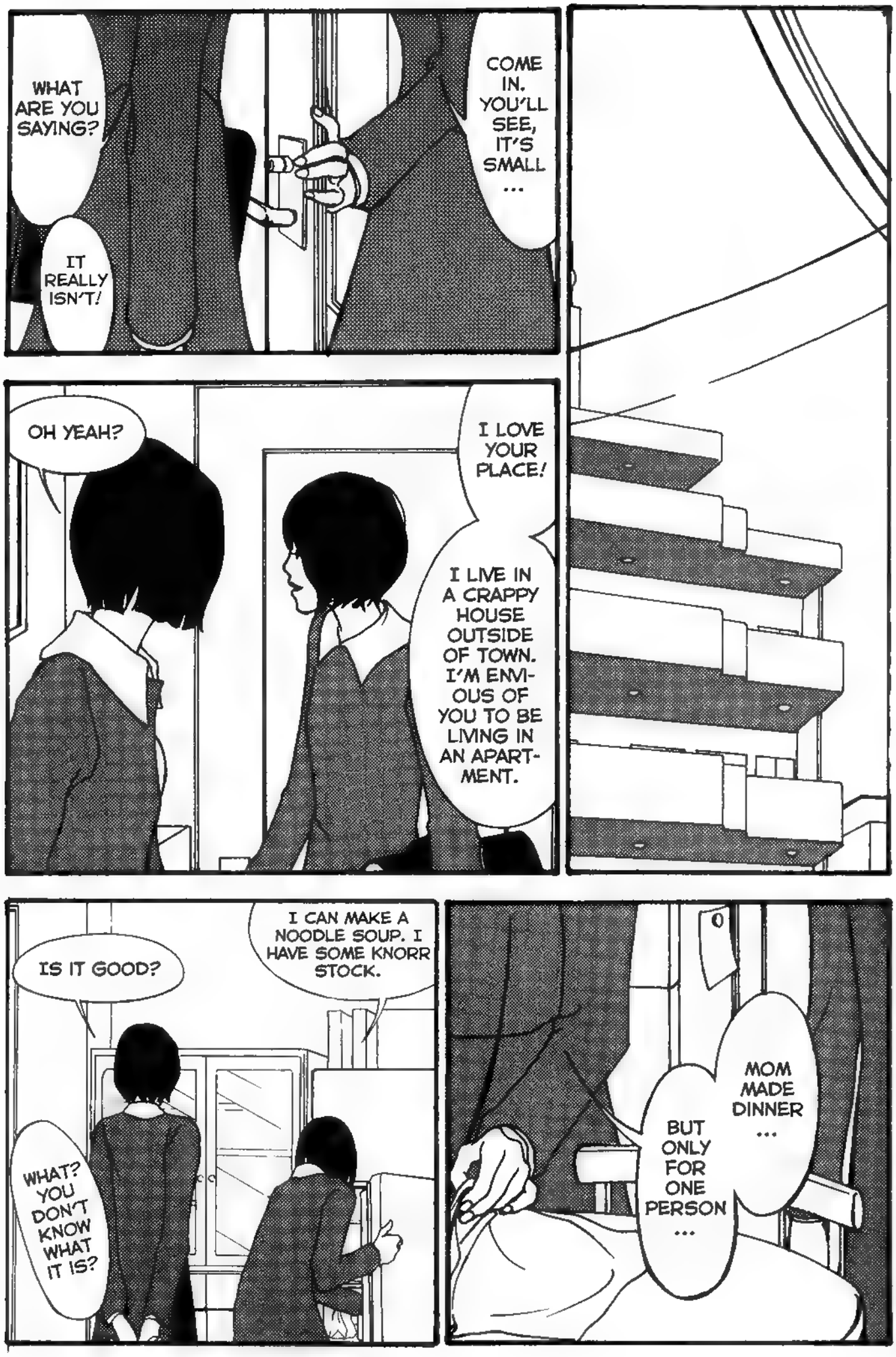
My parents are going on a business trip. They're not coming home tonight and I'm scared of ghosts...
Can you sleep at my place?
You can buy extra clothes at the store near my house.


KAYAKO! AFTER SCHOOL, I HAVE TO CALL A GUY FROM MEINAN TO PREPARE THE PARTY. YOU COMING WITH ME?



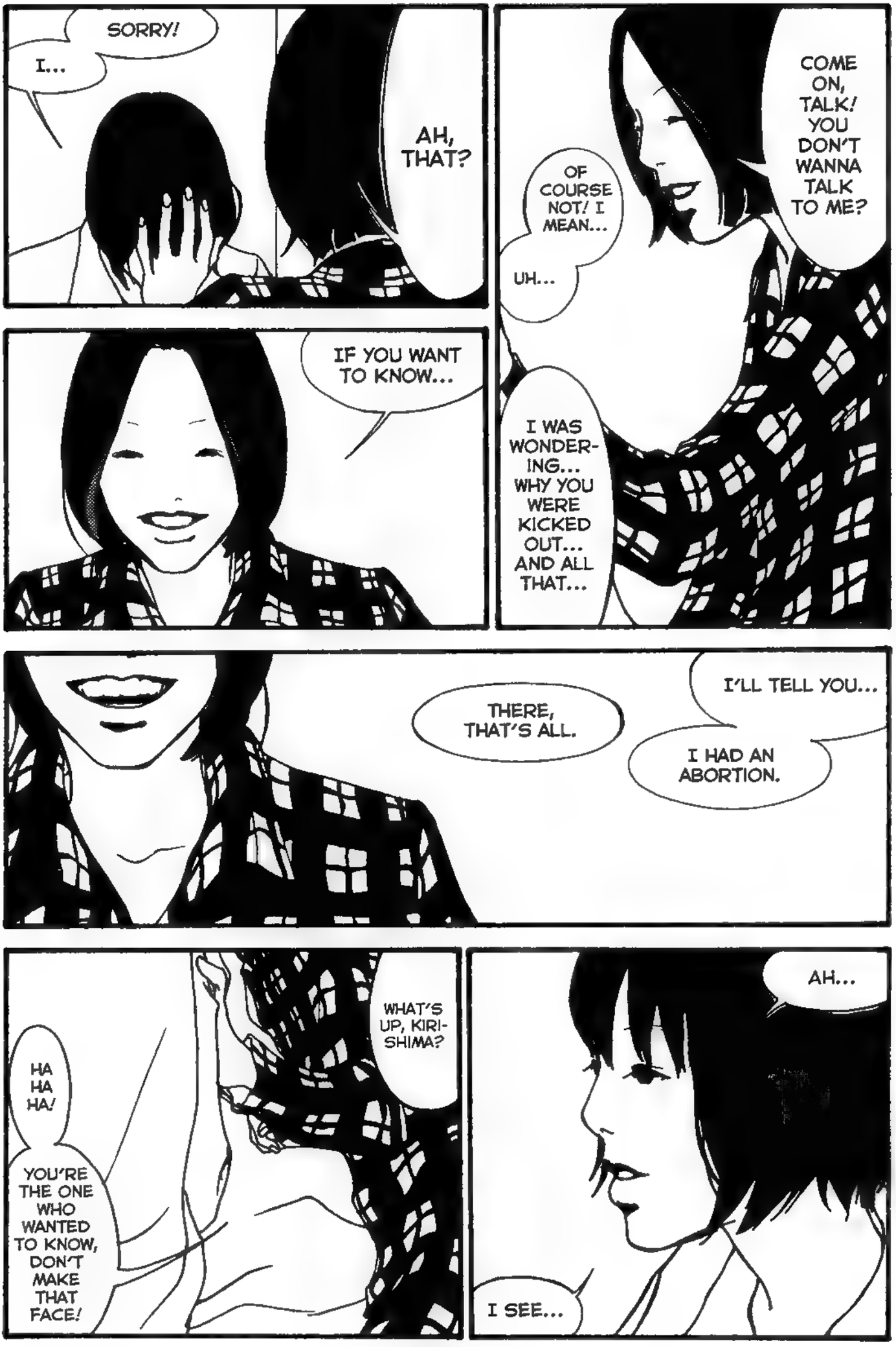
*Short for Mos Burger



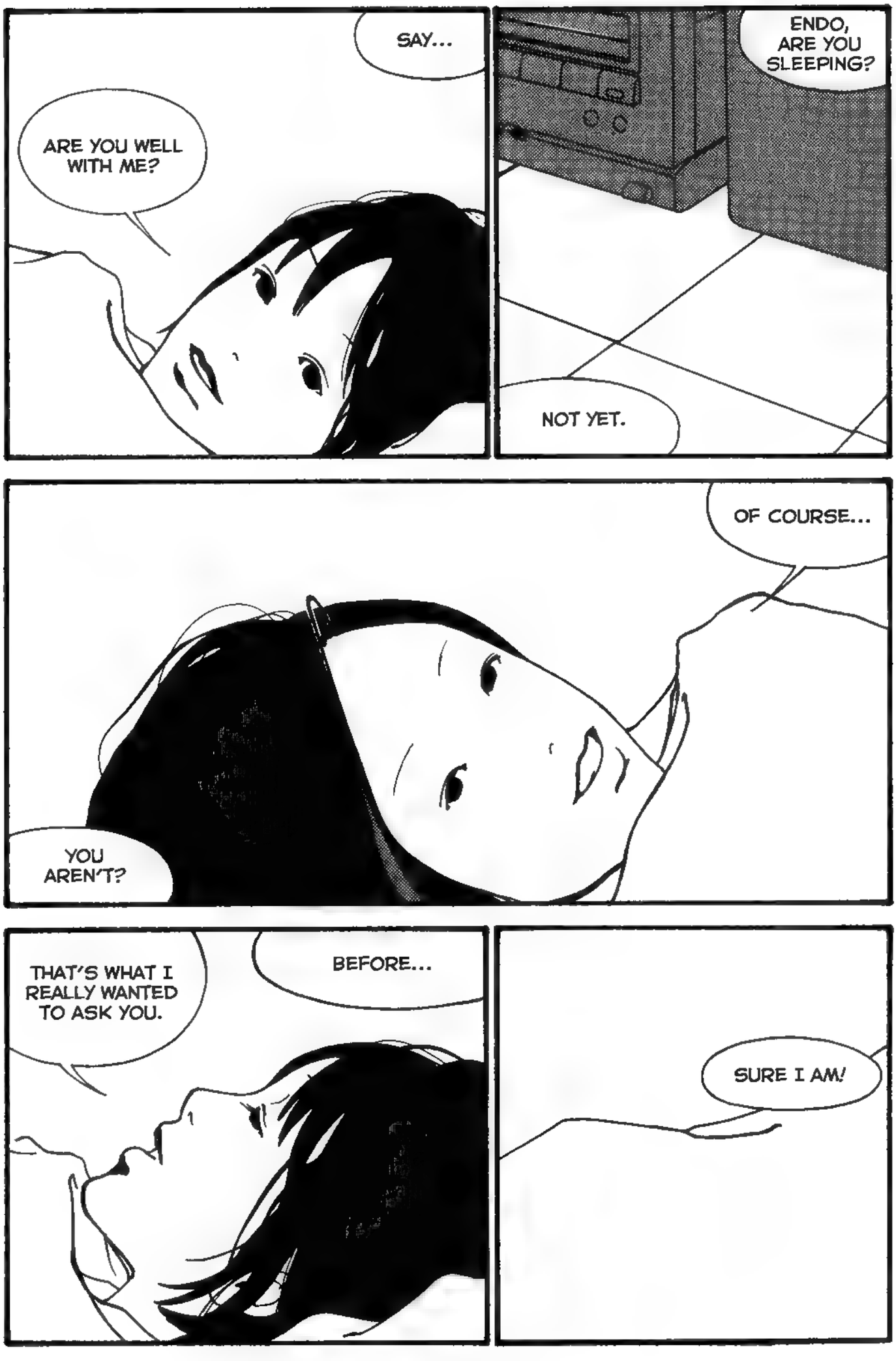

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
IT REALLY ISN'T!
COME IN. YOU'LL SEE, IT'S SMALL ...
OH YEAH?
I LOVE YOUR PLACE!
I LIVE IN A CRAPPY HOUSE OUTSIDE OF TOWN. I'M ENVIOUS OF YOU TO BE LIVING IN AN APARTMENT.
IS IT GOOD?
I CAN MAKE A NOODLE SOUP. I HAVE SOME KNORR STOCK.
WHAT? YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS?
MOM MADE DINNER ...
BUT ONLY FOR ONE PERSON ...

BUT IF YOU'RE ON THAT SIDE, YOU MIGHT END UP FALLING.
YOU CAN GO ON THE SIDE NEAR THE WALL.
I MOVE A LOT WHEN I SLEEP, SO I MIGHT PUSH YOU OFF THE BED...
HAVE YOU EVER FALLEN OUT OF YOUR BED, ENDO?
OF COURSE.
HA HA HA HA!
I WOULDN'T WANT YOU TO GET HURT. I'LL BE FINE HERE.

YOU'RE RIGHT...
IT CRACKS UP IN CERTAIN PLACES.
EH?
AH, YEAH.
SAY, ENDO...
WITH ME...
COME ON, TELL ME!
NO, NOTH-ING.
COME ON, I WANNA KNOW.
HM? WHAT?
UH...
NO, NOTHING.

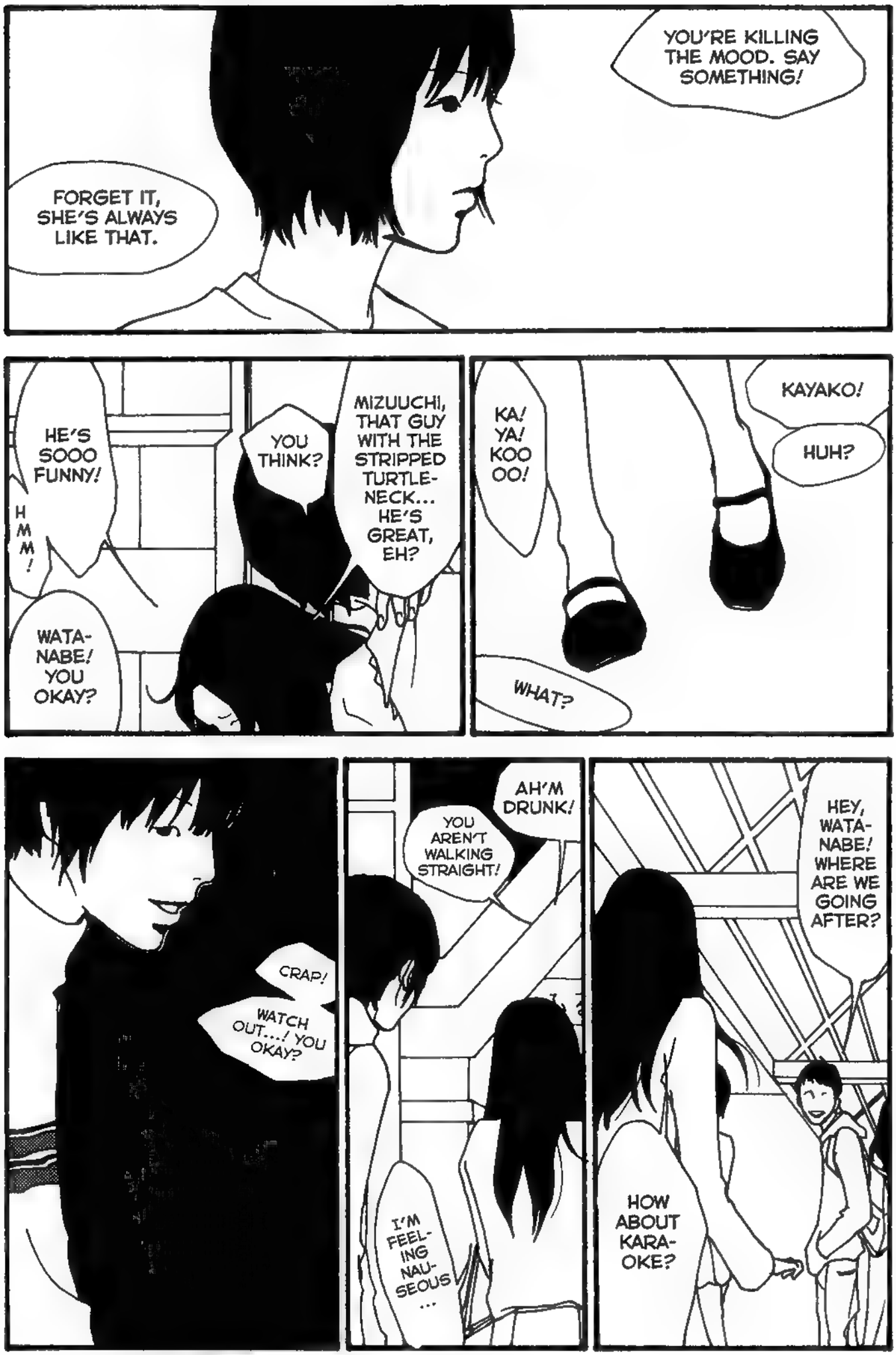

SORRY!
I...
AH, THAT?
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW...
COME ON, TALK! YOU DON'T WANNA TALK TO ME?
OF COURSE NOT! I MEAN...
UH...
I WAS WONDER-ING... WHY YOU WERE KICKED OUT... AND ALL THAT...
I'LL TELL YOU...
THERE, THAT'S ALL.
I HAD AN ABORTION.
WHAT'S UP, KIRI-SHIMA?
HA HA HA!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO KNOW, DON'T MAKE THAT FACE!
AH...
I SEE...

DID IT HURT?
EH?
NO, I WAS UNDER ANES-THESIA.
BUT STILL, IT WAS TOUGH...
YEAH, PRETTY TOUGH...
I'VE FORGOTTEN...
I DON'T KNOW...

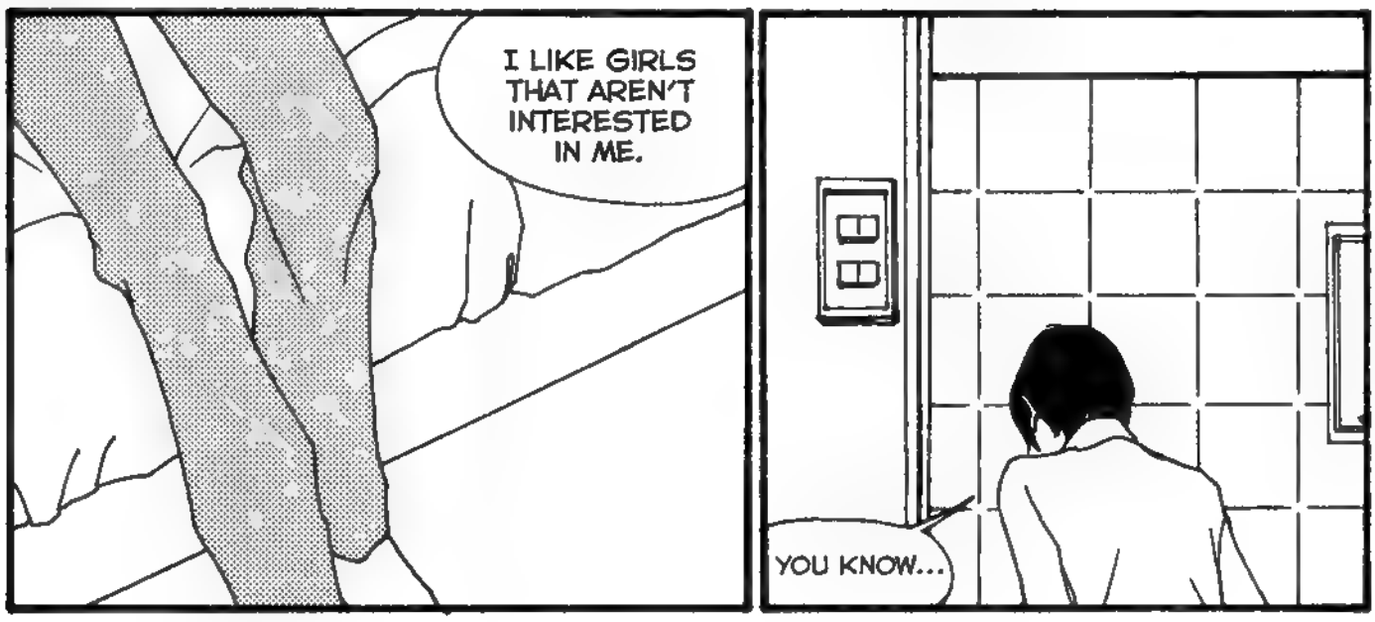

SAY...
ARE YOU WELL WITH ME?
ENDO, ARE YOU SLEEPING?
NOT YET.
OF COURSE...
YOU AREN'T?
BEFORE...
THAT'S WHAT I REALLY WANTED TO ASK YOU.
SURE I AM!

FOR US, HIJIRI HIGH SCHOOL...

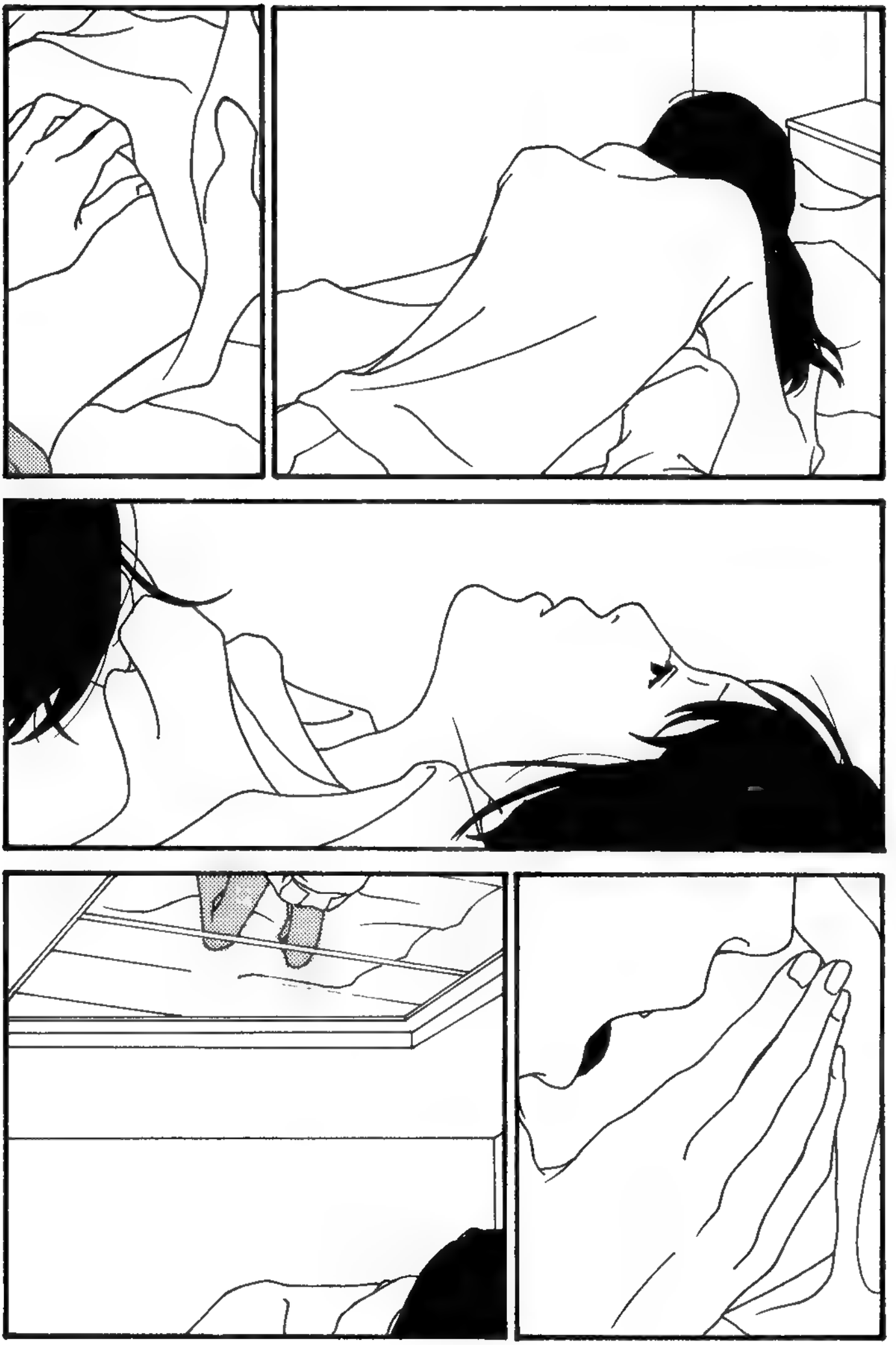
IT'S AN ALL GIRL SCHOOL, SO WE SEE YOU AS ELEGANT GIRLS!
OH YEAH? NOT EVEN HALF OF US REALLY APPLY, THOUGH. WE'RE NOT ALL STYLISH, YOU KNOW...
NOT ALL STYLISH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
LIKE WEARING PANTS UNDER THEIR SKIRT.
SERI-OUSLY? YOU'RE KIDDING!
THE GIRLS AT MEINAN WOULDN'T DO THAT!
THIS, HOW-EVER, THEY DO!
HA HA HA HA!
HEY, COULD WE ORDER?
IT'S DIS-GUST-ING
HEY!
YOU, THERE ...
YOU HAVEN'T SAID ANYTHING ALL NIGHT!


YOU'RE KILLING THE MOOD. SAY SOMETHING!
FORGET IT, SHE'S ALWAYS LIKE THAT.
MIZUUCHI, THAT GUY WITH THE STRIPPED TURTLE-NECK... HE'S GREAT, EH?
YOU THINK?
HE'S SOOO FUNNY!
HMM!
WATA-NABE! YOU OKAY?
KAYAKO!
HUH?
KA! YA! KOO OO!
WHAT?
HEY, WATA-NABE! WHERE ARE WE GOING AFTER?
HOW ABOUT KARA-OKE?
AH'M DRUNK!
YOU AREN'T WALKING STRAIGHT!
I'M FEEL-ING NAU-SEOUS ...
CRAP!
WATCH OUT...! YOU OKAY?

WANNA GO TO A HOTEL?


I LIKE GIRLS THAT AREN'T INTERESTED IN ME.
YOU KNOW...

MOVE DOWN A LITTLE!
THE BATH'S READY.
ARE YOU...
A VIRGIN?
BY THE WAY...
WHAT MUSIC DO YOU WANT TO LISTEN TO?
HEY! DID YOU FORGET HOW TO TALK?



"You don't think
I'm too pathetic?"

KAYAKO! WHAT DID YOU DO AFTERWARDS?
...I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING!
WHEN I WOKE UP, I WAS ASLEEP IN MY ROOM!
I HAVE A HANGOVER AND MY HEAD'S KILLING ME!
WHAT DID YOU DO? DID YOU CONTINUE PARTYING ELSE-WHERE?
NO, I WENT HOME.
OH YEAH? THAT SUCKS!
I FEEL BAD FOR MISSING OUT ON A GREAT OCCASION.

ARE YOU NUTS?
I'D NEVER HAVE THE COURAGE.
STOP IT!
I SHOULD HAVE ASKED FOR MIZUUCHI'S PHONE NUMBER!
YOU CAN STILL GET IT FROM ONE OF HIS FRIENDS.

Sorry, Watanabe...

Sorry...

But I don't feel like I've done something wrong.

I just wanted to...

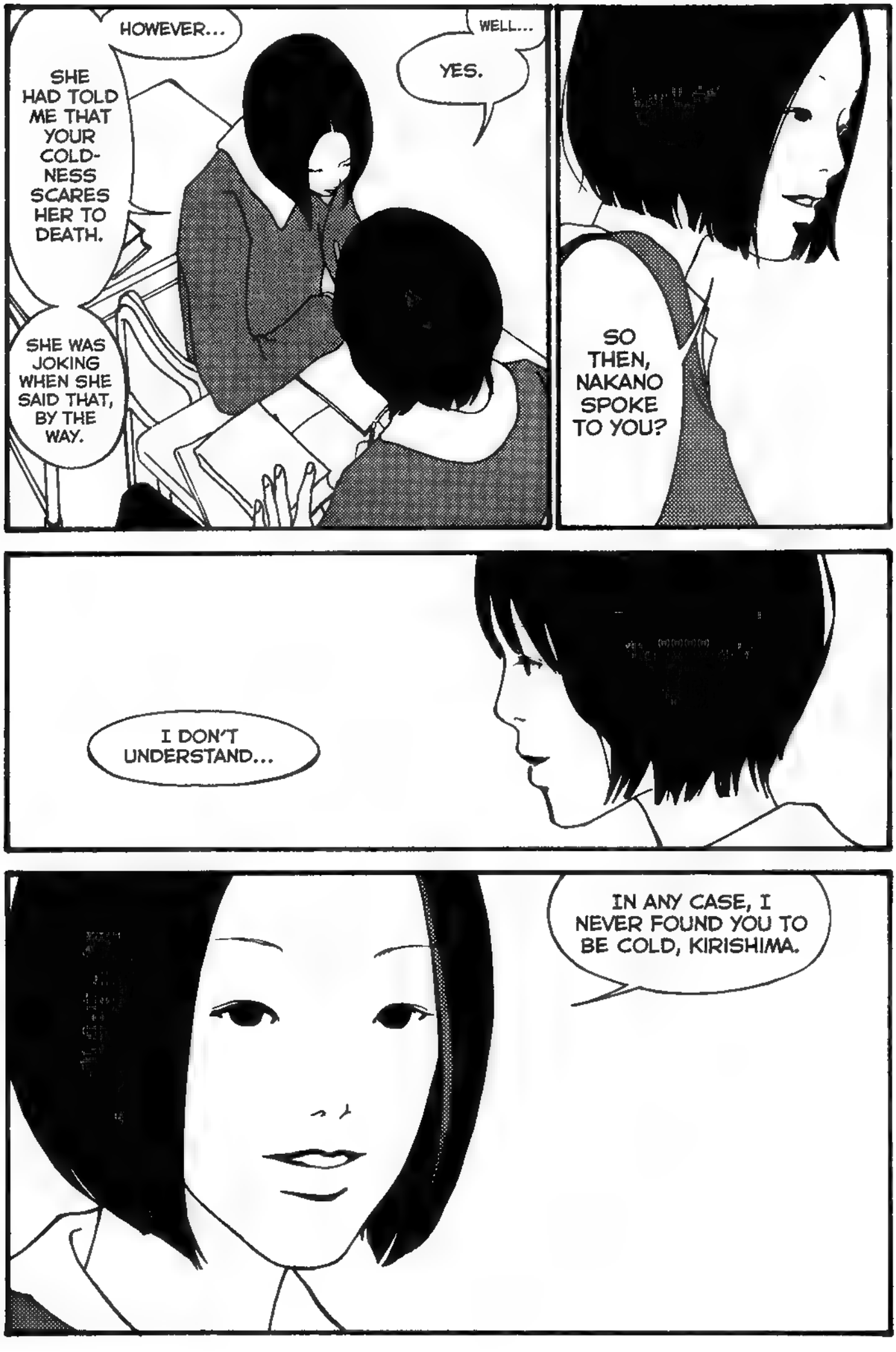
I just wanted to...

get myself closer
to you, Endo...

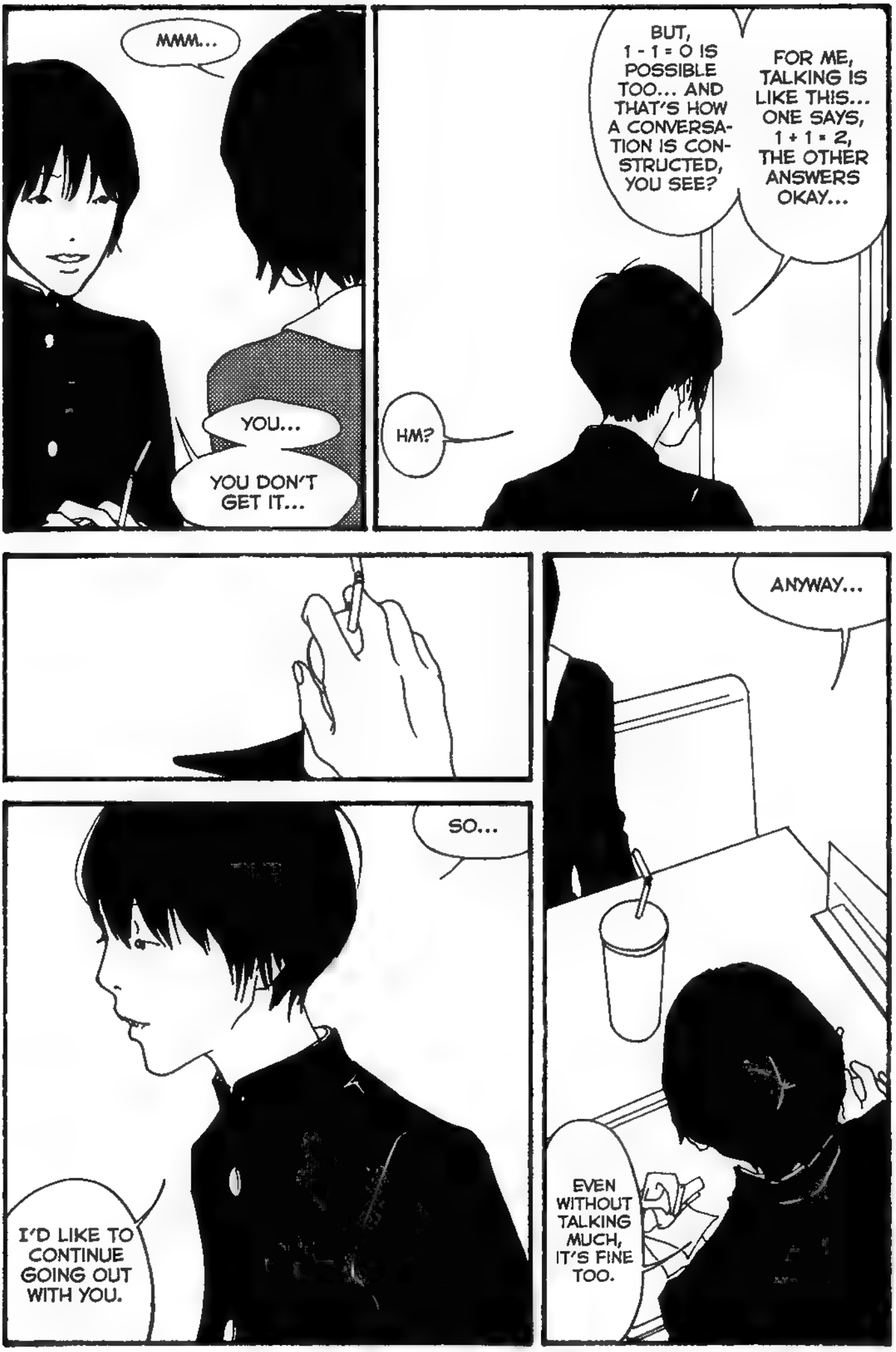
To feel closer to you,
Masami.

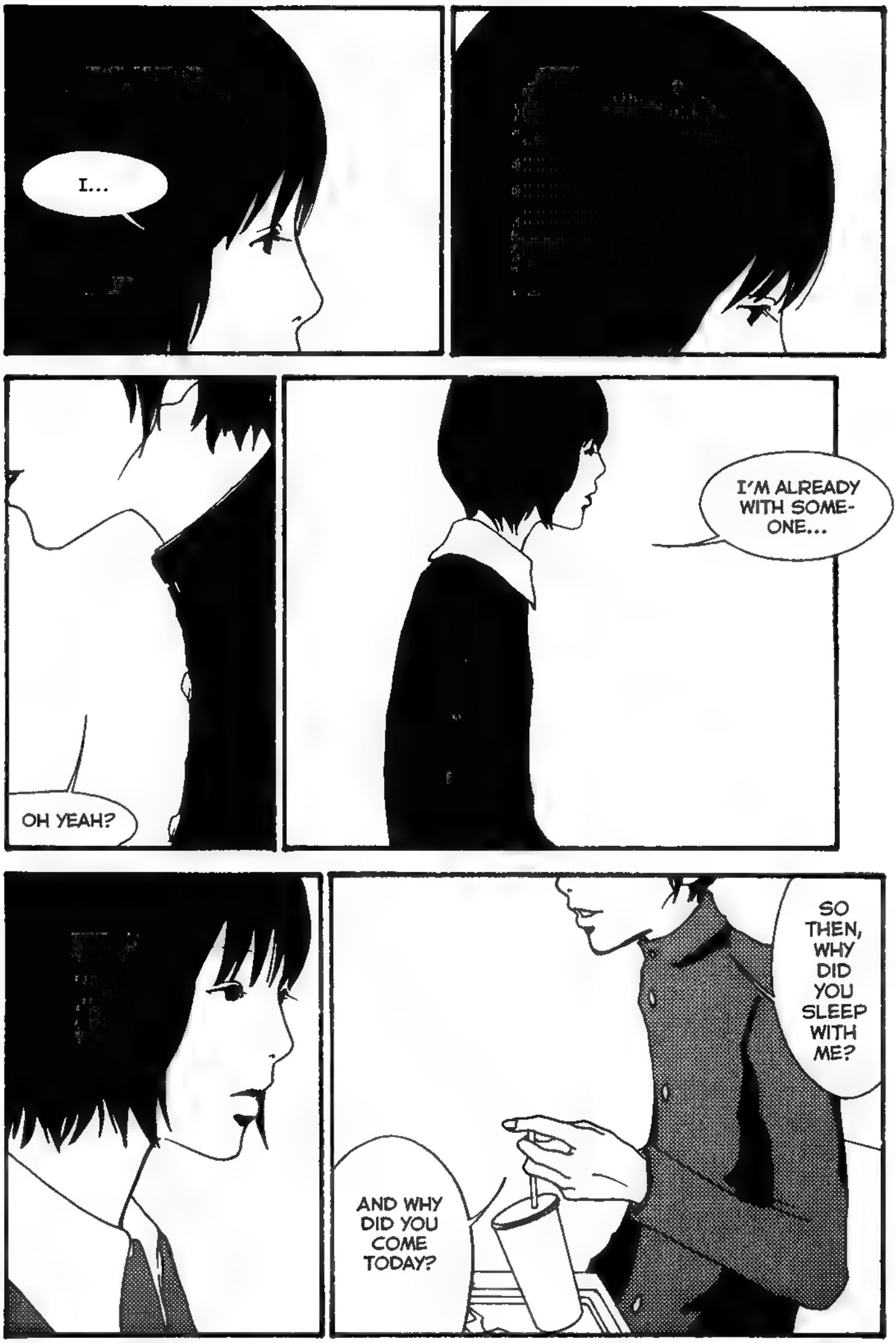
Chapter 3

AH!
HEYA, KIRISHIMA!
HELLO!


HOWEVER...
SHE HAD TOLD ME THAT YOUR COLD-NESS SCARES HER TO DEATH.
SHE WAS JOKING WHEN SHE SAID THAT, BY THE WAY.
WELL...
YES.
SO THEN, NAKANO SPOKE TO YOU?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
IN ANY CASE, I NEVER FOUND YOU TO BE COLD, KIRISHIMA.

For Masami, Nakano is more important than I am...


MMM...
YOU...
YOU DON'T GET IT...
HM?
BUT, 1 - 1 = 0 IS POSSIBLE TOO... AND THAT'S HOW A CONVERSATION IS CONSTRUCTED, YOU SEE?
FOR ME, TALKING IS LIKE THIS... ONE SAYS, 1 + 1 = 2, THE OTHER ANSWERS OKAY...
ANYWAY...
SO...
I'D LIKE TO CONTINUE GOING OUT WITH YOU.
EVEN WITHOUT TALKING MUCH, IT'S FINE TOO.


I...
OH YEAH?
I'M ALREADY WITH SOME-ONE...
AND WHY DID YOU COME TODAY?
SO THEN, WHY DID YOU SLEEP WITH ME?

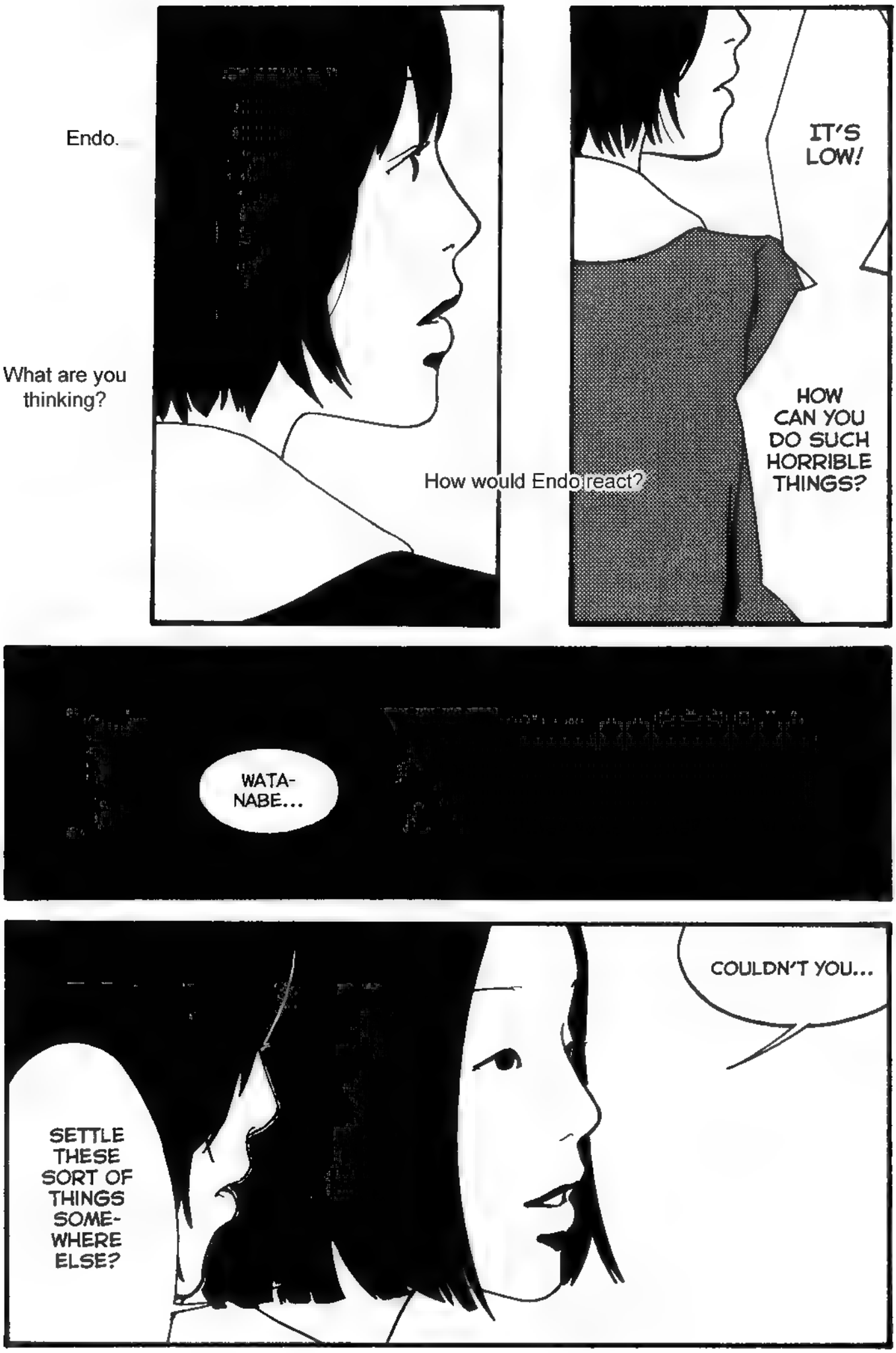
I THOUGHT IT'D BE SIMPLER TO LOVE A BOY...
ARE YOU SCREWING WITH ME?
I DON'T KNOW.
I THOUGHT THAT BY SEEING YOU AGAIN, I'D START TO LOVE YOU...
NO, THERE AREN'T ANY JAPA-NESE CLASS-ES FOR 3C TODAY.
OH DEAR! WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?
ENDO!
DO YOU HAVE A DICTIONARY?
WAIT!

GREAT! CAN I BORROW IT?
OF COURSE.
I HAVE ONE.
YOU'RE PRETTY LUCKY, NAKANO!
YOU'RE A LIFE-SAVER, KIRI-SHIMA!
THANKS!
I'LL GET IT BACK TO YOU AS SOON AS I'M DONE.

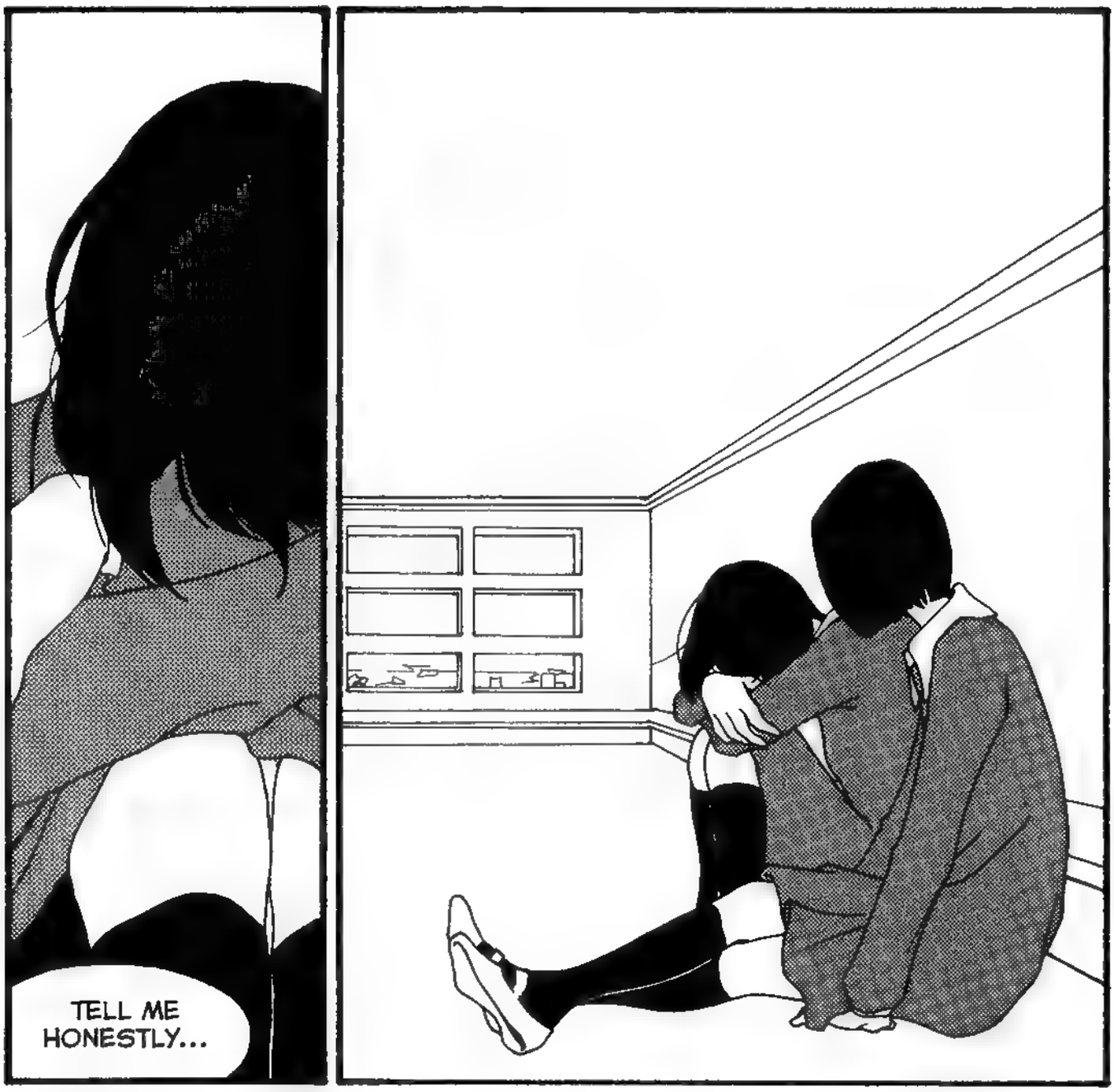
WHY, YOU'RE SO NICE, KIRISHIMA!
STOP THAT!
HI, WATANABE!

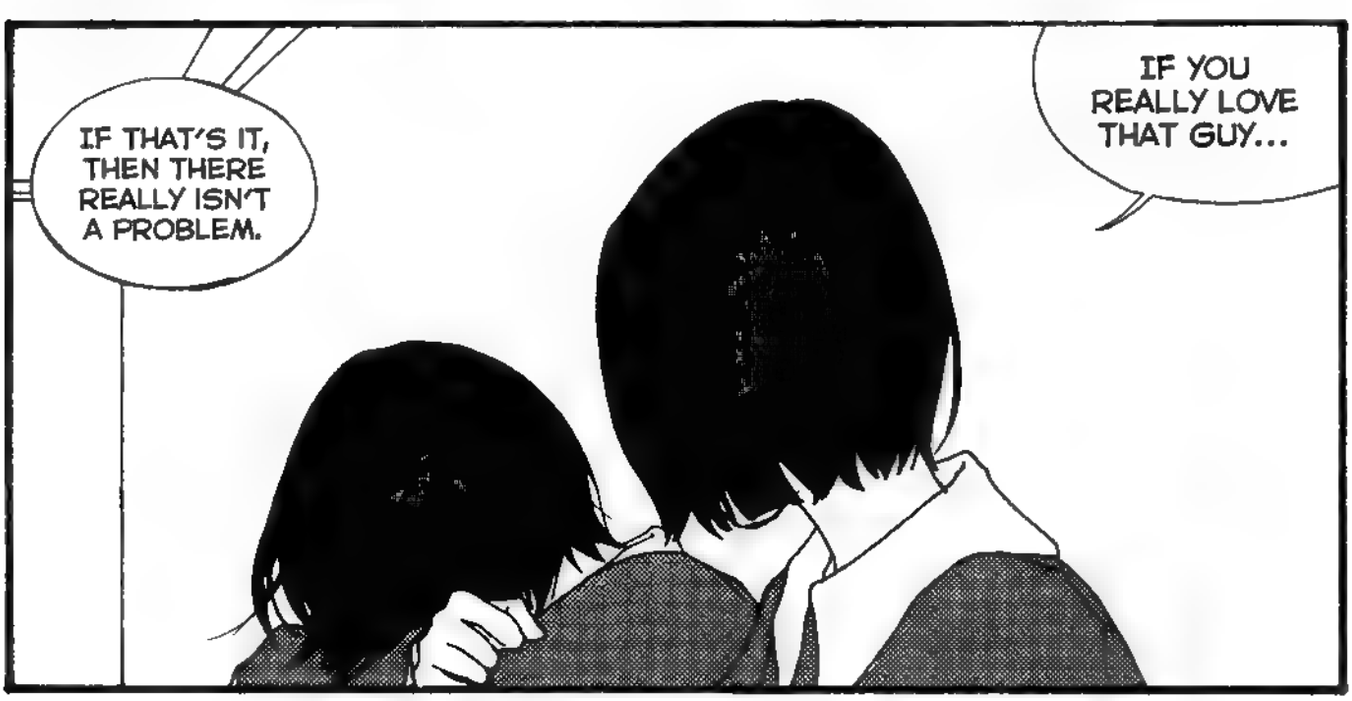
HEY.
OH!
WATAN-ABE! WHAT'S WRONG?
KAYAKO!!!
WHAT DOES THIS MEAN!?

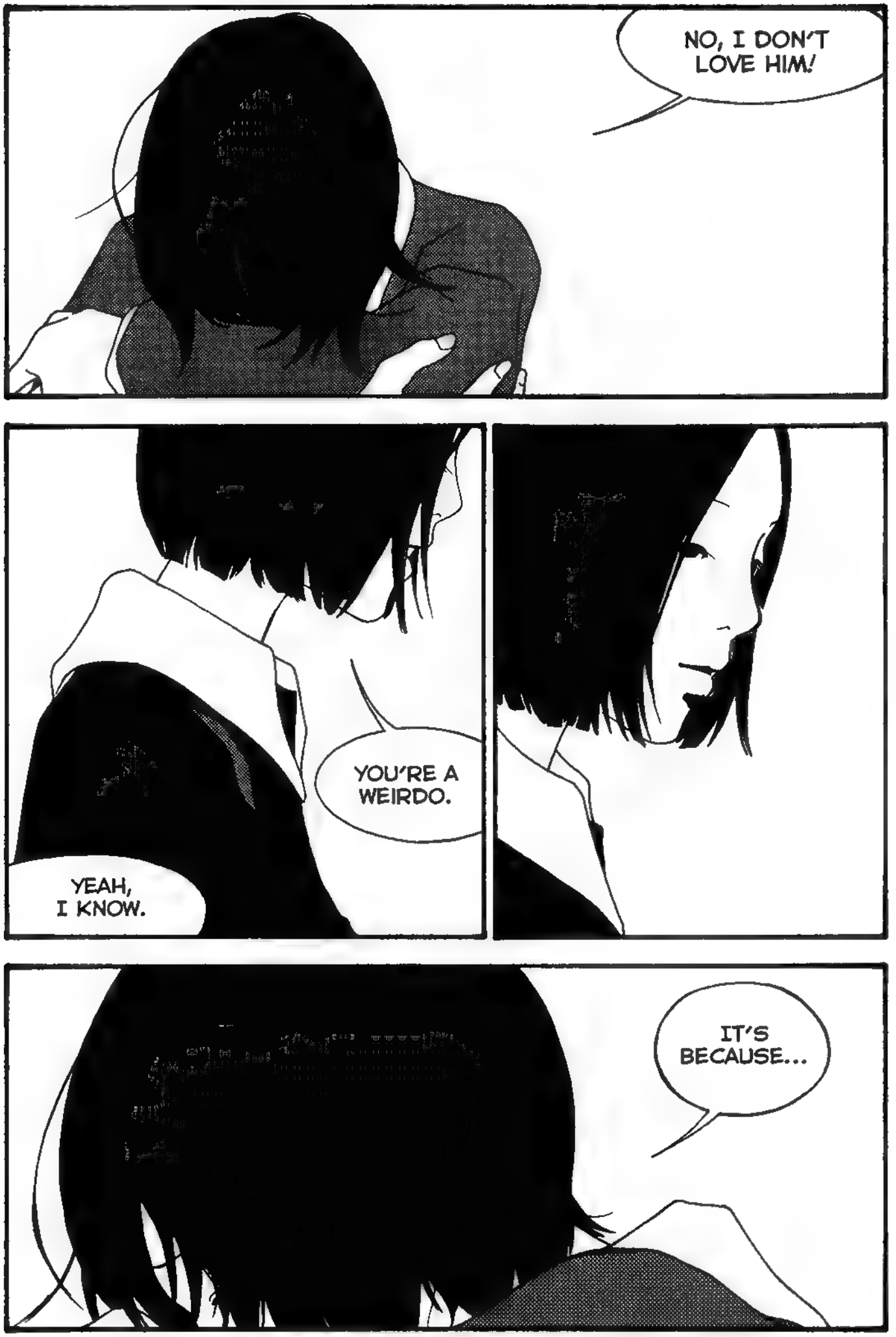
THE GUYS FROM MEINAN TOLD ME EVERY-THING!
YOU'RE REALLY DISGUST-ING!
WHEN I TOLD YOU THAT I WAS INTERESTED IN HIM, YOU WERE THE ONE ACTING LIKE YOU WERE HAPPY FOR ME!
TELL ME, WHY DID YOU DO THAT?
YOU'RE AWFUL!
ANSWER ME!
YOU WENT TO A HOTEL WITH MIZUUCHI!!! WHY!?

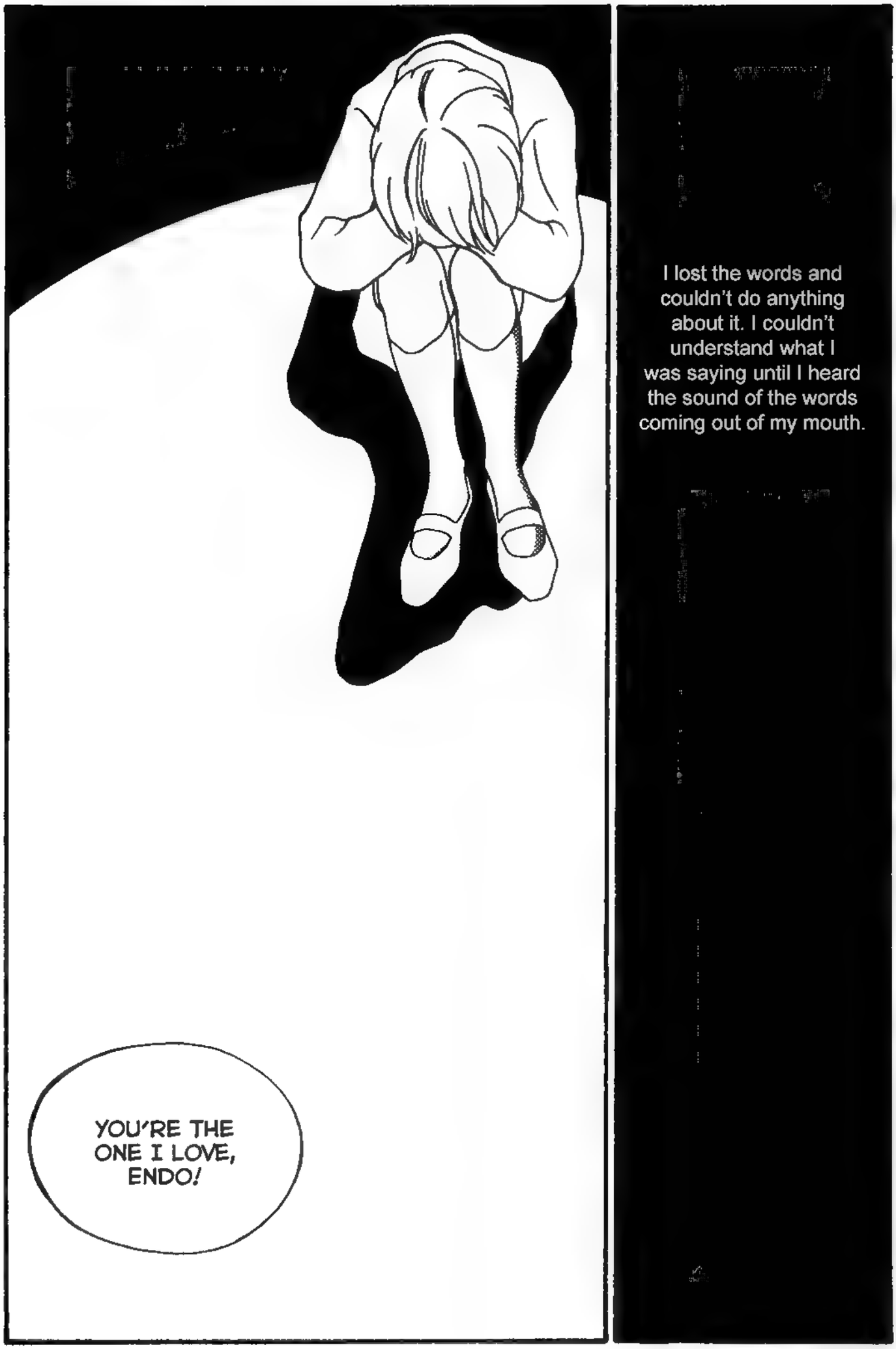

Endo.
What are you thinking?
How would Endo react?
IT'S LOW!
HOW CAN YOU DO SUCH HORRIBLE THINGS?
WATA-NABE...
COULDN'T YOU...
SETTLE THESE SORT OF THINGS SOME-WHERE ELSE?

BOUUHH...
UUUUHH...
ARE YOU OKAY, KIRISHIMA?
HIHI! IT WAS FUNNY!
I KNOW I SHOULDN'T BE SAYING THAT!

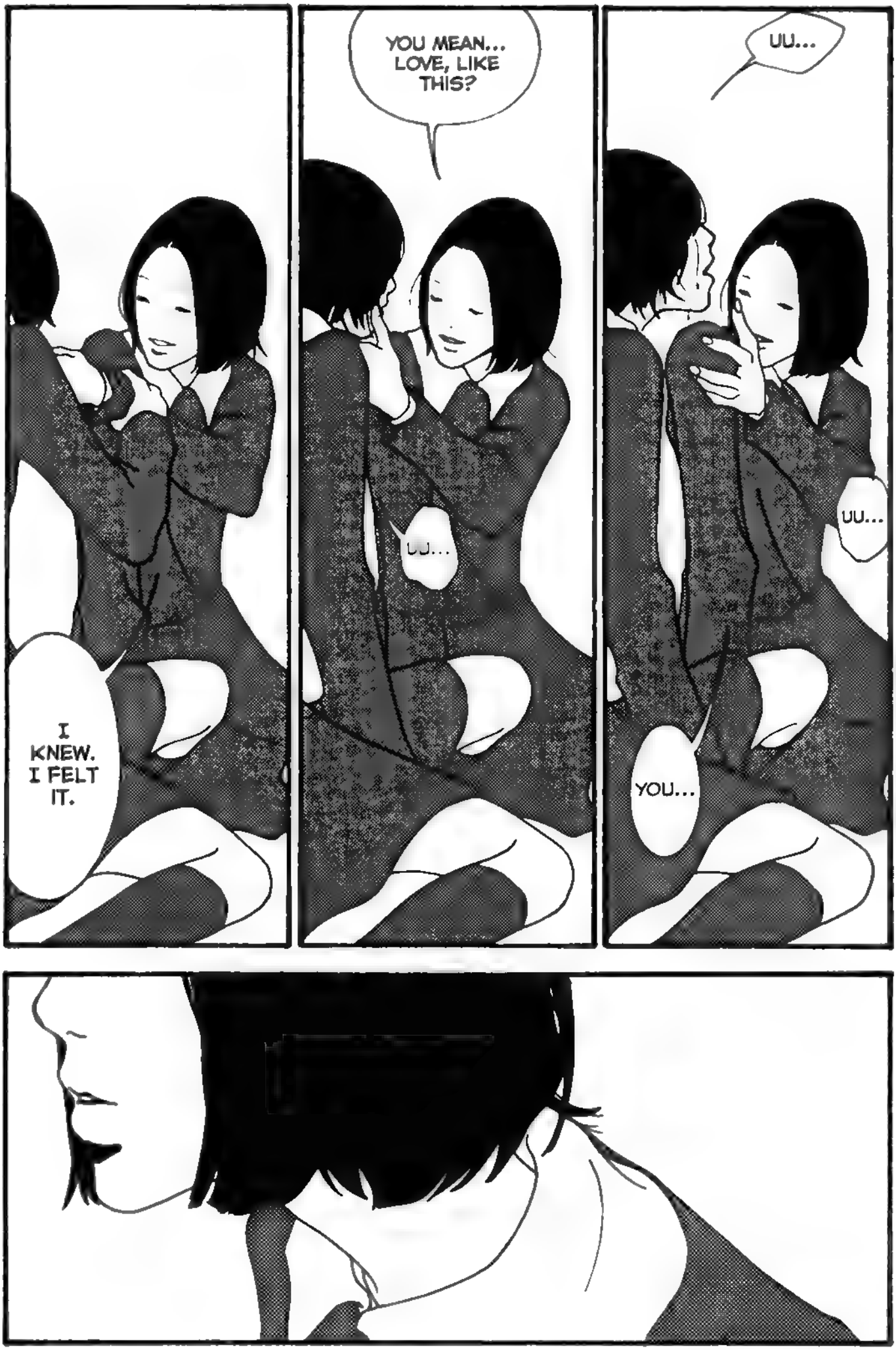

TELL ME HONESTLY...

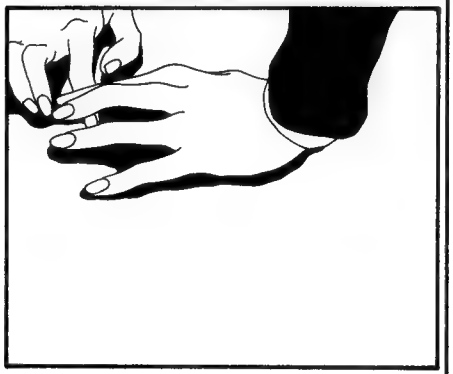

IF YOU REALLY LOVE THAT GUY...
IF THAT'S IT, THEN THERE REALLY ISN'T A PROBLEM.


NO, I DON'T LOVE HIM!
YEAH, I KNOW.
YOU'RE A WEIRDO.
IT'S BECAUSE...


I lost the words and couldn't do anything about it. I couldn't understand what I was saying until I heard the sound of the words coming out of my mouth.
YOU'RE THE ONE I LOVE, ENDO!

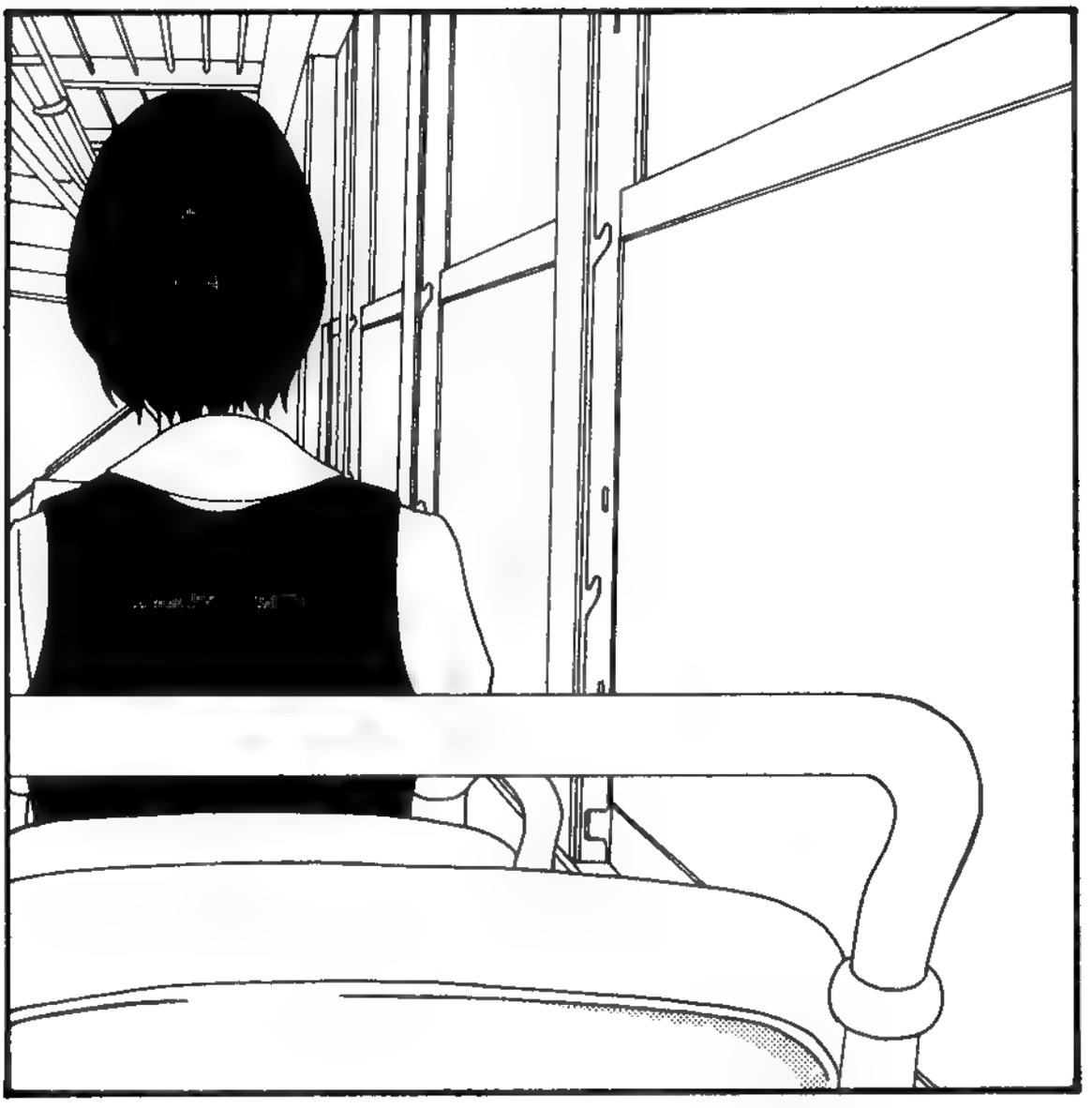
UUUU...
I...
I... UUUU...
UUUU...
KIRISHIMA!


I KNEW. I FELT IT.
YOU MEAN... LOVE, LIKE THIS?
UU...
UU...
UU...
YOU...

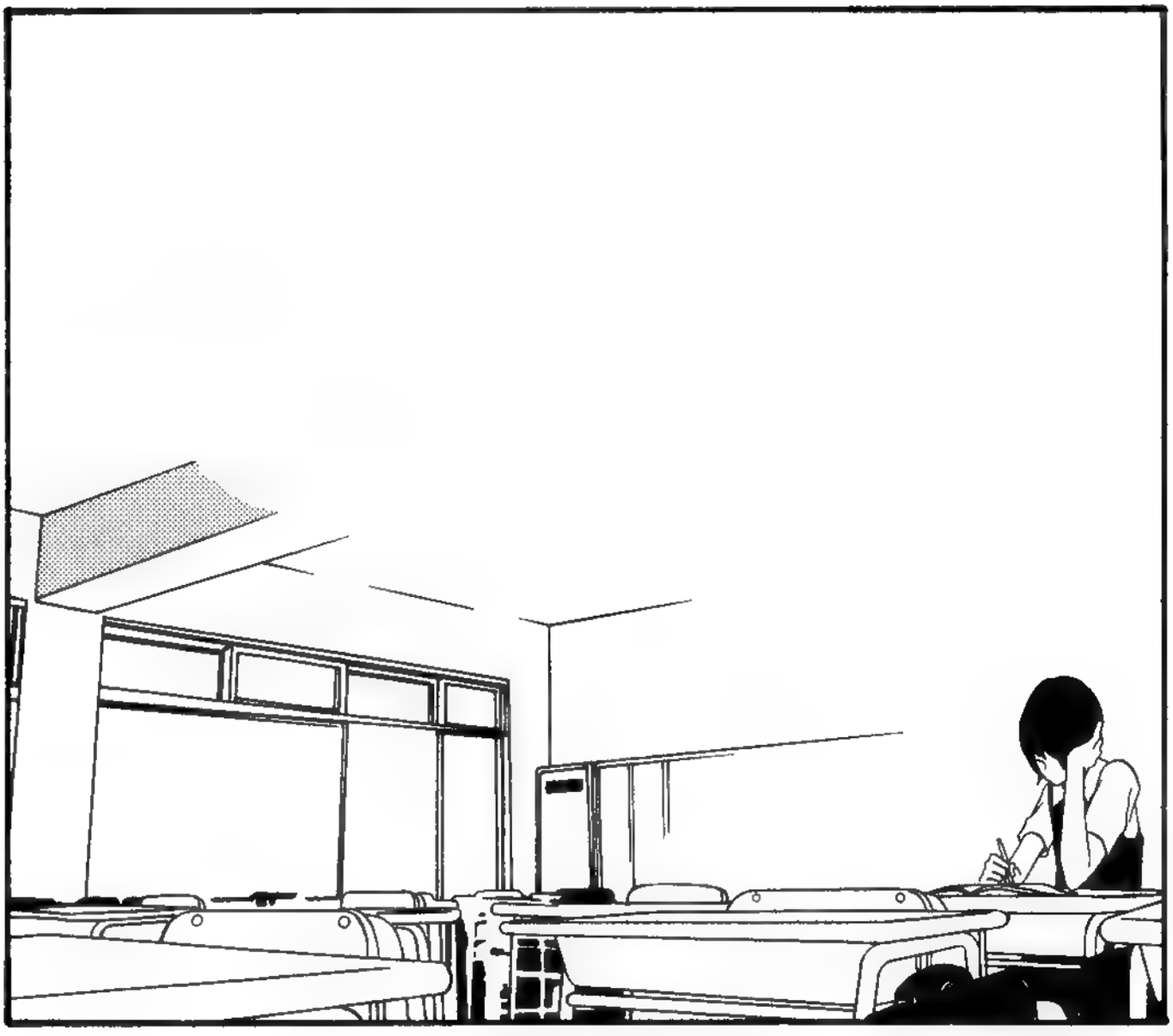


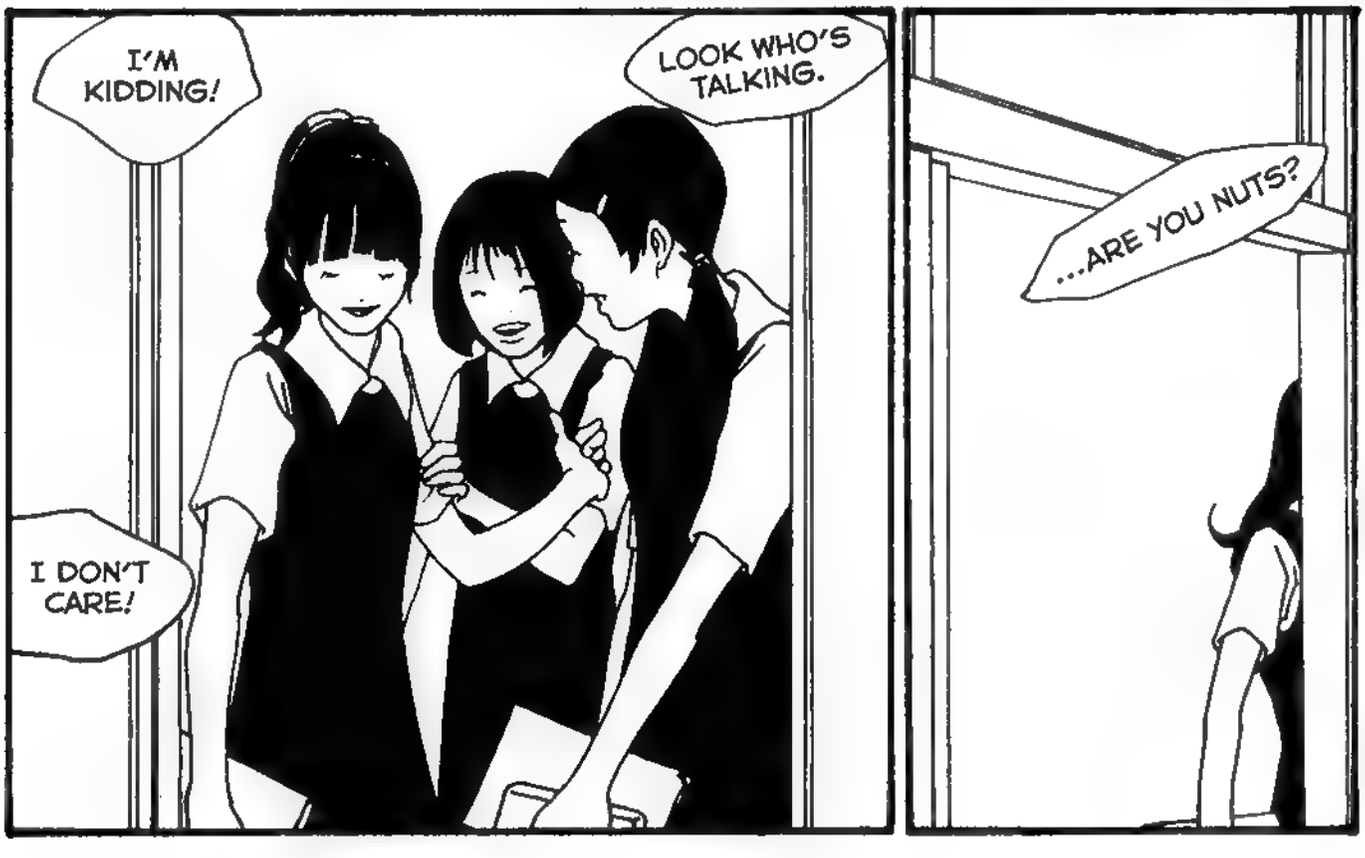
I DON'T KNOW...
HOW TO SAY IT...

...I'M HAPPY.



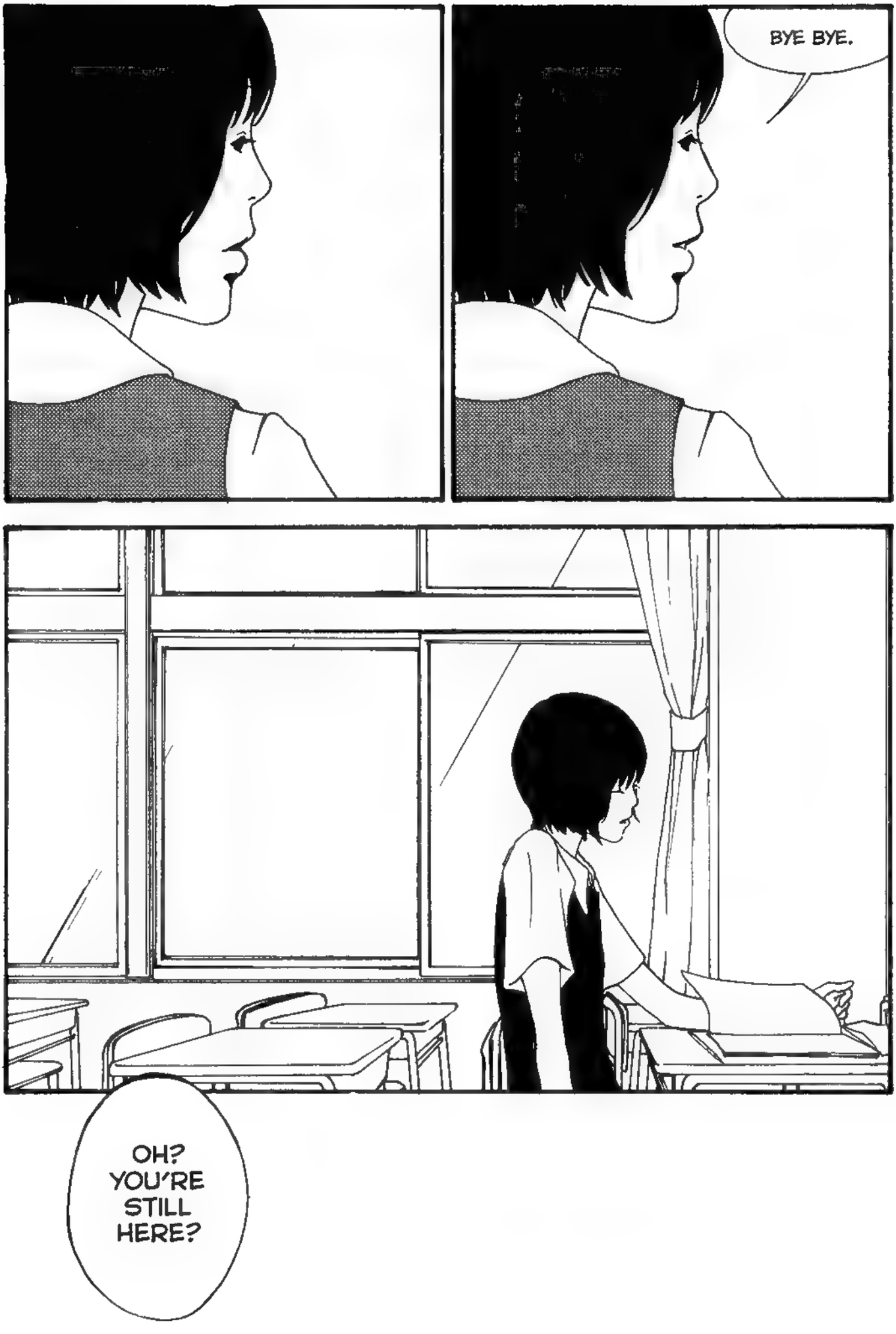
Chapter 4

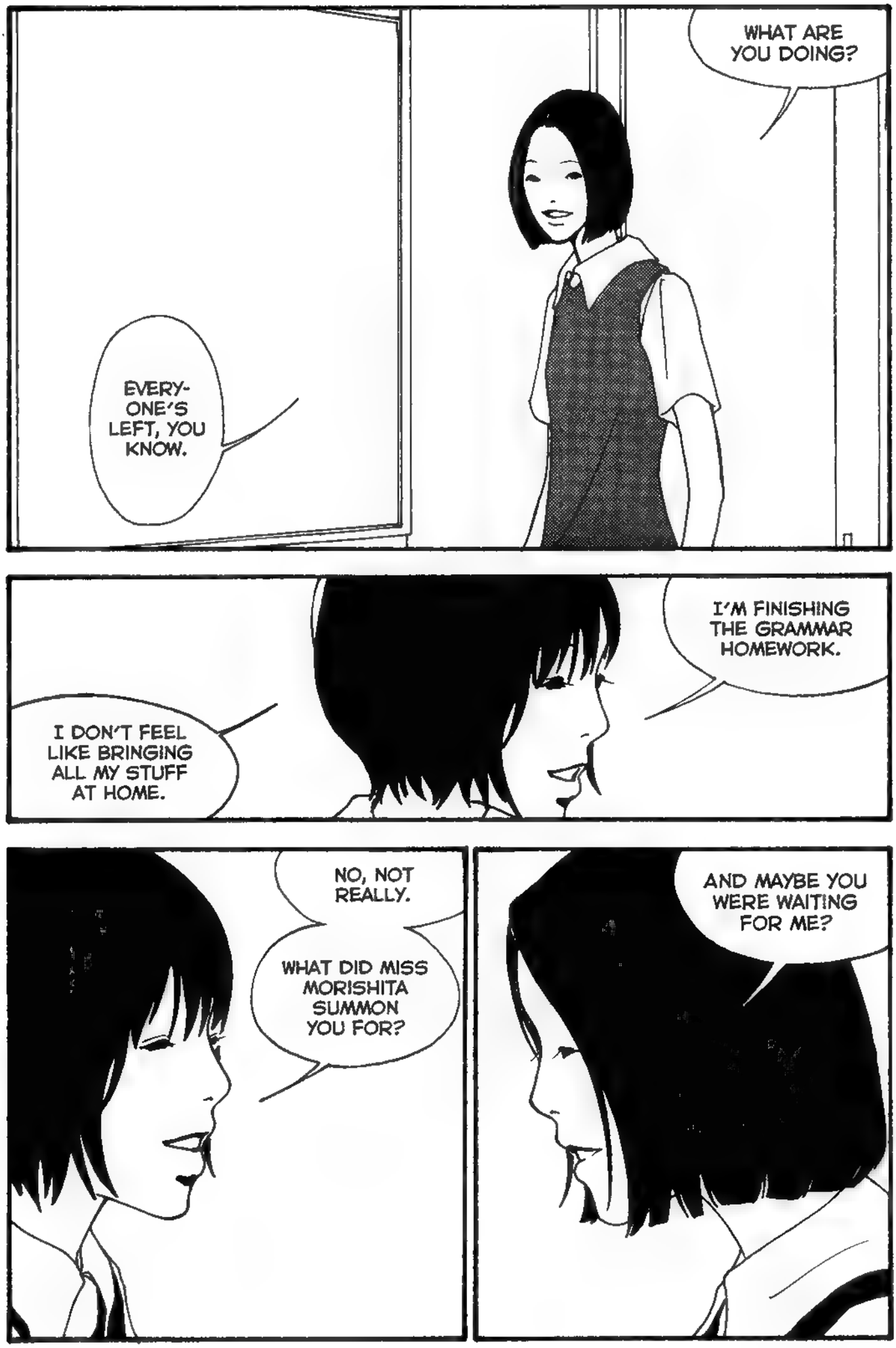


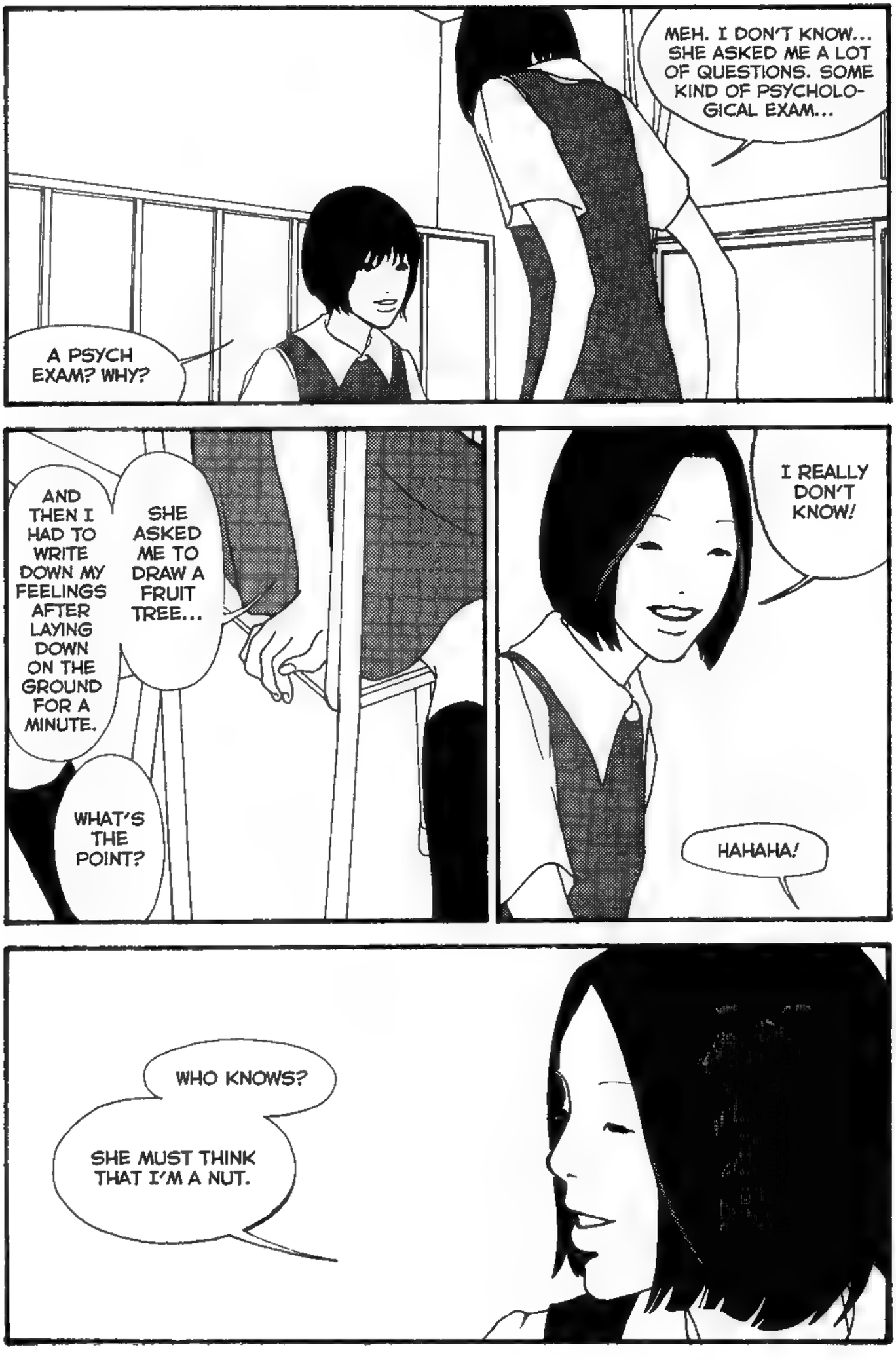

I'M KIDDING!
LOOK WHO'S TALKING.
I DON'T CARE!
...ARE YOU NUTS?

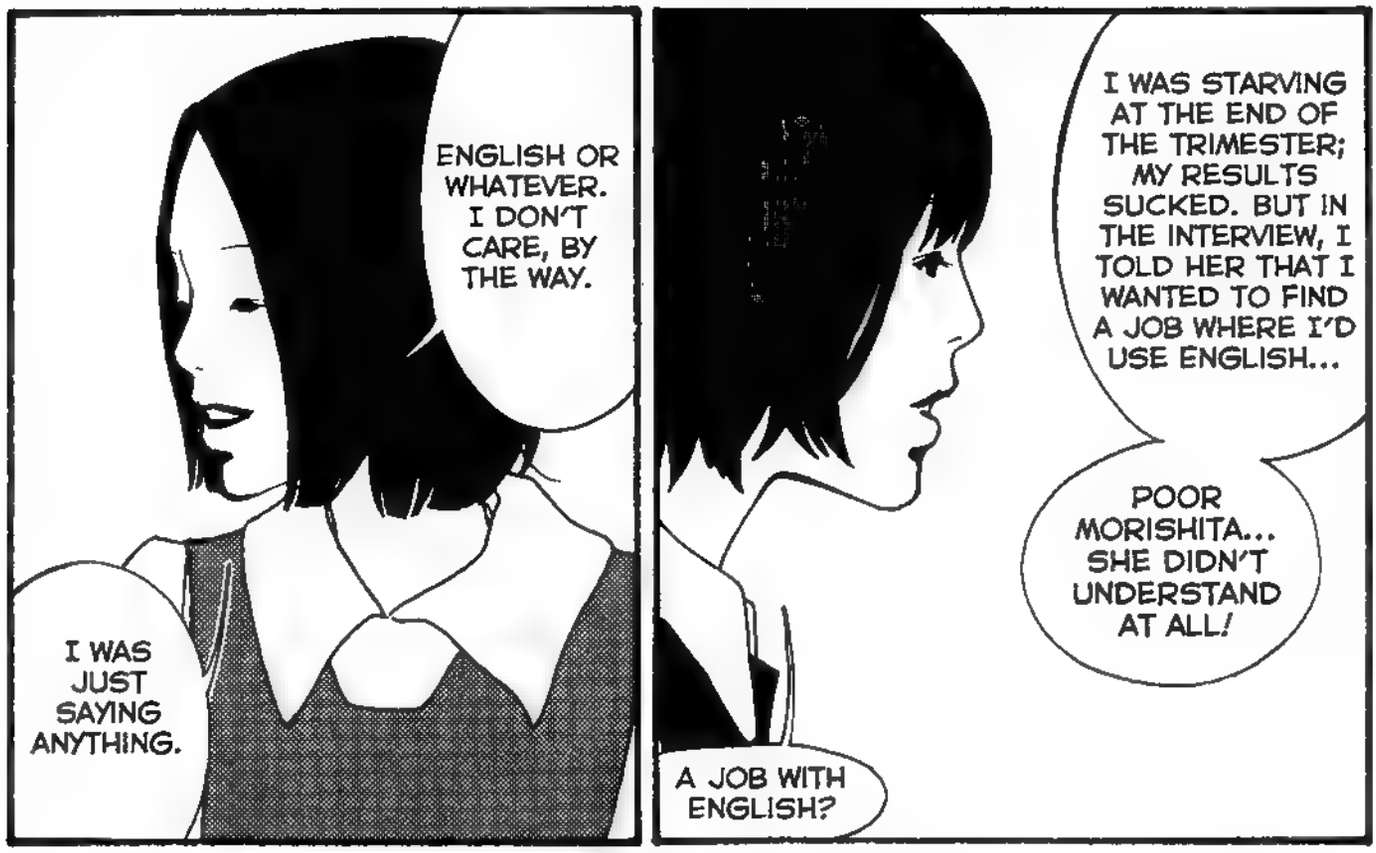
AH!
NO, I'M STAYING FOR A LITTLE LONGER.
KAYAKO! YOU'RE NOT GOING HOME?

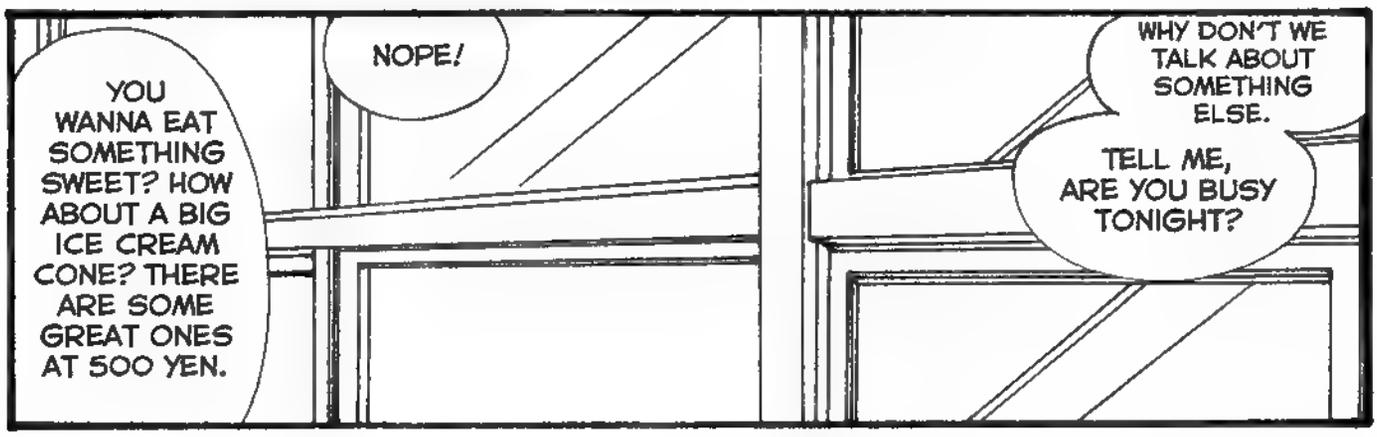
YOU NEED TO BRING ALL THAT BACK TODAY?
LOOKS HEAVY!
BYE BYE, KAYAKO!


BYE BYE.
OH? YOU'RE STILL HERE?

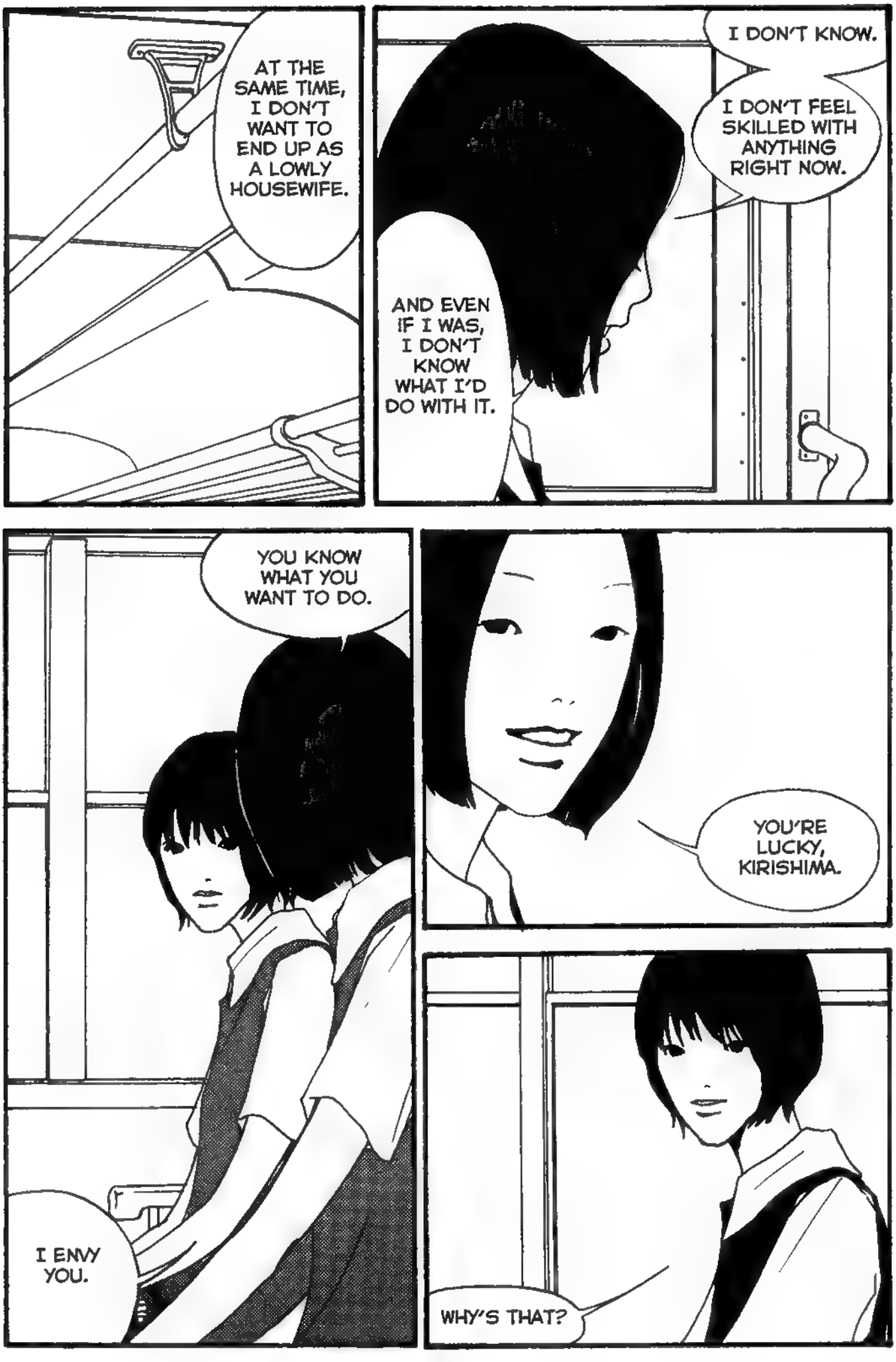

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
EVERY-ONE'S LEFT, YOU KNOW.
I'M FINISHING THE GRAMMAR HOMEWORK.
I DON'T FEEL LIKE BRINGING ALL MY STUFF AT HOME.
NO, NOT REALLY.
WHAT DID MISS MORISHITA SUMMON YOU FOR?
AND MAYBE YOU WERE WAITING FOR ME?


MEH. I DON'T KNOW... SHE ASKED ME A LOT OF QUESTIONS. SOME KIND OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAM...
A PSYCH EXAM? WHY?
AND THEN I HAD TO WRITE DOWN MY FEELINGS AFTER LAYING DOWN ON THE GROUND FOR A MINUTE.
SHE ASKED ME TO DRAW A FRUIT TREE...
WHAT'S THE POINT?
I REALLY DON'T KNOW!
HAHAHA!
WHO KNOWS?
SHE MUST THINK THAT I'M A NUT.

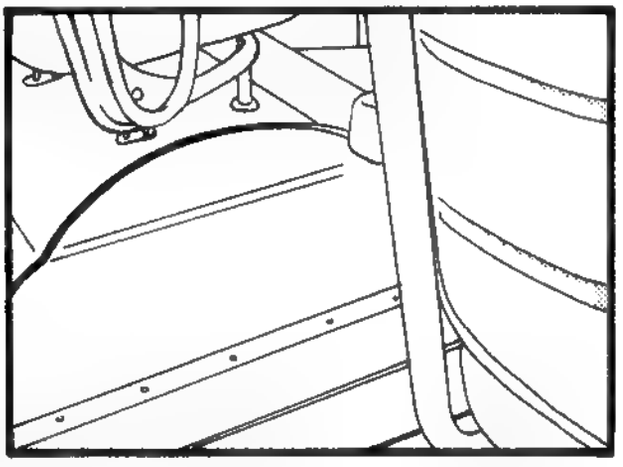

ENGLISH OR WHATEVER. I DON'T CARE, BY THE WAY.
I WAS JUST SAYING ANYTHING.
I WAS STARVING AT THE END OF THE TRIMESTER; MY RESULTS SUCKED. BUT IN THE INTERVIEW, I TOLD HER THAT I WANTED TO FIND A JOB WHERE I'D USE ENGLISH...
POOR MORISHITA... SHE DIDN'T UNDERSTAND AT ALL!
A JOB WITH ENGLISH?

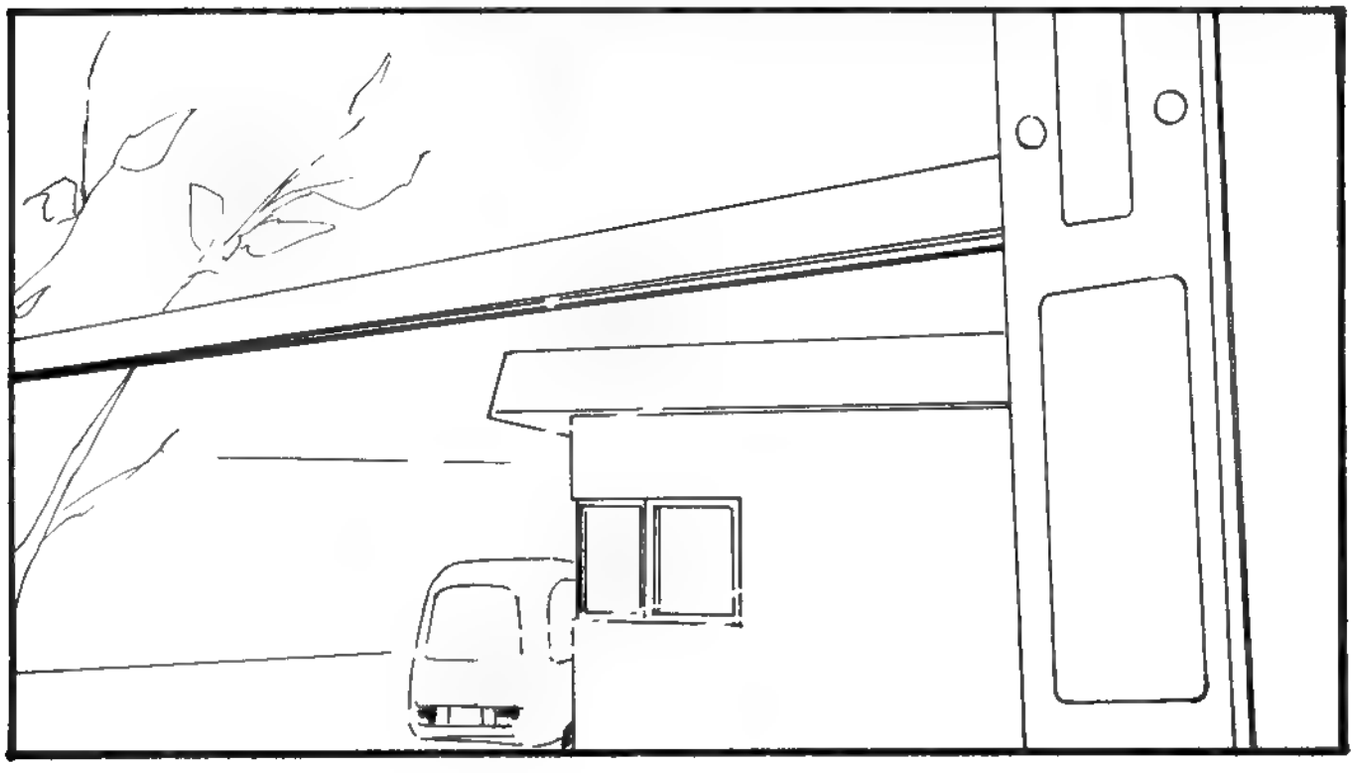

YOU WANNA EAT SOMETHING SWEET? HOW ABOUT A BIG ICE CREAM CONE? THERE ARE SOME GREAT ONES AT 500 YEN.
NOPE!
WHY DON'T WE TALK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE.
TELL ME, ARE YOU BUSY TONIGHT?

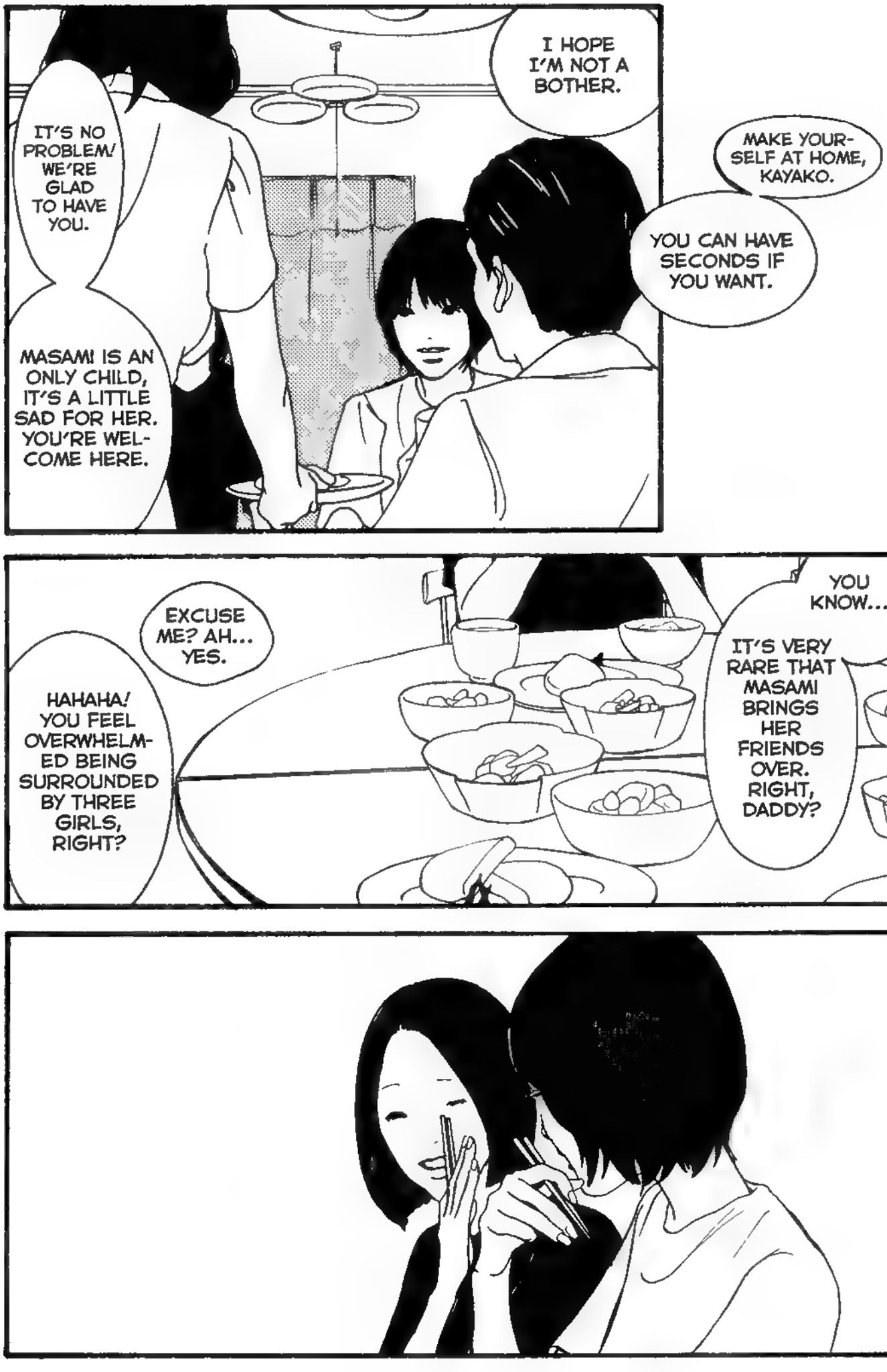
SAY, KIRISHIMA, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO AFTER HIGH SCHOOL?
I WANT TO GO TO A GRAPHICS OR ART SCHOOL.
OH YEAH?
IN TOKYO?
MAYBE... YEAH, I'D LIKE TO.
AND YOU, ENDO?


AT THE SAME TIME, I DON'T WANT TO END UP AS A LOWLY HOUSEWIFE.
I DON'T KNOW.
I DON'T FEEL SKILLED WITH ANYTHING RIGHT NOW.
AND EVEN IF I WAS, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITH IT.
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT TO DO.
I ENVY YOU.
YOU'RE LUCKY, KIRISHIMA.
WHY'S THAT?

IT'S REALLY NO BIG DEAL...

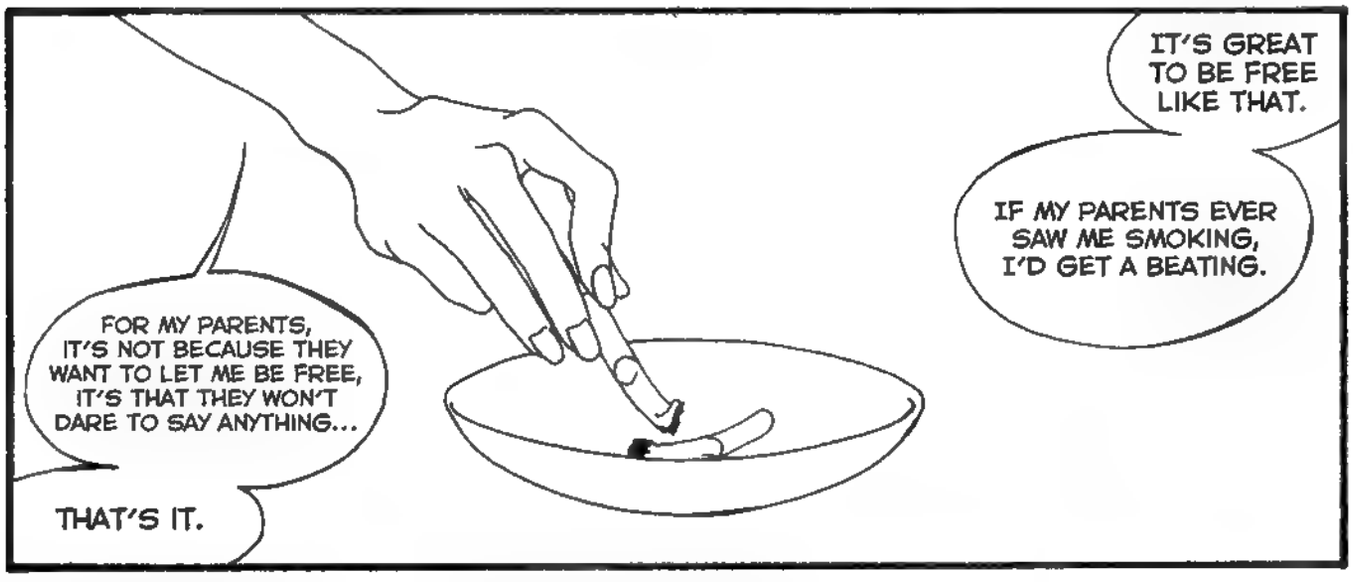


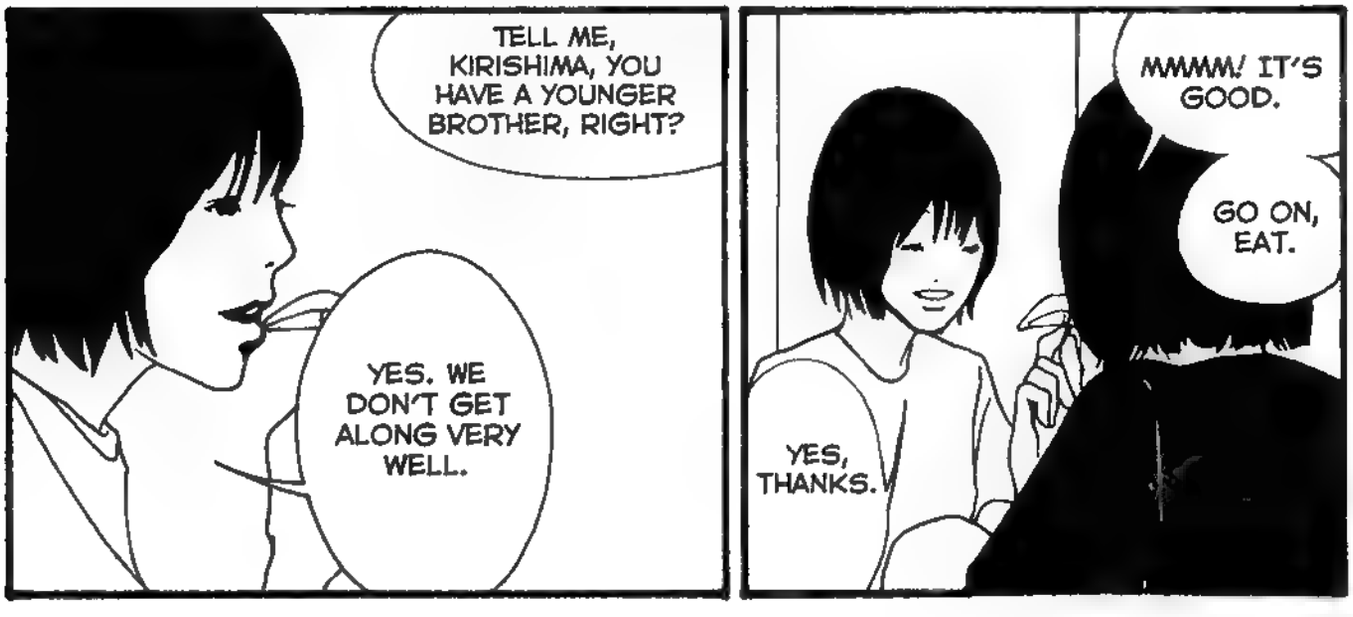



I HOPE I'M NOT A BOTHER.
IT'S NO PROBLEM! WE'RE GLAD TO HAVE YOU.
MAKE YOURSELF AT HOME, KAYAKO.
YOU CAN HAVE SECONDS IF YOU WANT.
MASAMI IS AN ONLY CHILD, IT'S A LITTLE SAD FOR HER. YOU'RE WELCOME HERE.
EXCUSE ME? AH... YES.
YOU KNOW...
IT'S VERY RARE THAT MASAMI BRINGS HER FRIENDS OVER. RIGHT, DADDY?
HAHAHA! YOU FEEL OVERWHELMED BEING SURROUNDED BY THREE GIRLS, RIGHT?

MASAMI? KAYAKO?
GENERALLY, DINNERS HERE ARE A LITTLE CALMER, YOU KNOW.
CAN I COME IN?
I CUT AN APPLE UP, WOULD YOU LIKE SOME?
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
OH, IT WAS MY PLEASURE!
THANKS.

YOU DON'T CRUSH THE BUTT ENDS?
DON'T WORRY, IT DOESN'T MATTER IF SHE SEES. SHE KNOWS I SMOKE.


IT'S GREAT TO BE FREE LIKE THAT.
IF MY PARENTS EVER SAW ME SMOKING, I'D GET A BEATING.
FOR MY PARENTS, IT'S NOT BECAUSE THEY WANT TO LET ME BE FREE, IT'S THAT THEY WON'T DARE TO SAY ANYTHING...
THAT'S IT.


TELL ME, KIRISHIMA, YOU HAVE A YOUNGER BROTHER, RIGHT?
YES. WE DON'T GET ALONG VERY WELL.
MMMM! IT'S GOOD.
GO ON, EAT.
YES, THANKS.

HOW OLD?
ELEVEN YEARS OLD.
HE'S STILL A KID.
IS HE GOING TO TAKE FOLLOW IN HIS DAD'S FOOTSTEPS?
WE DON'T KNOW. HE'S STILL YOUNG.
HMM...
DEEP DOWN INSIDE, I'D LIKE IF HE'D STAY WITH MY PARENTS...
WHILE I DID EVERYTHING I WANTED...
YOU KNOW, IT'S ANNOYING. I CAN'T IMAGINE MY BROTHER LEAVING THE HOUSE.
THE WAY I SEE IT...
I THINK THAT FAMILY IS LIKE A CANNONBALL.

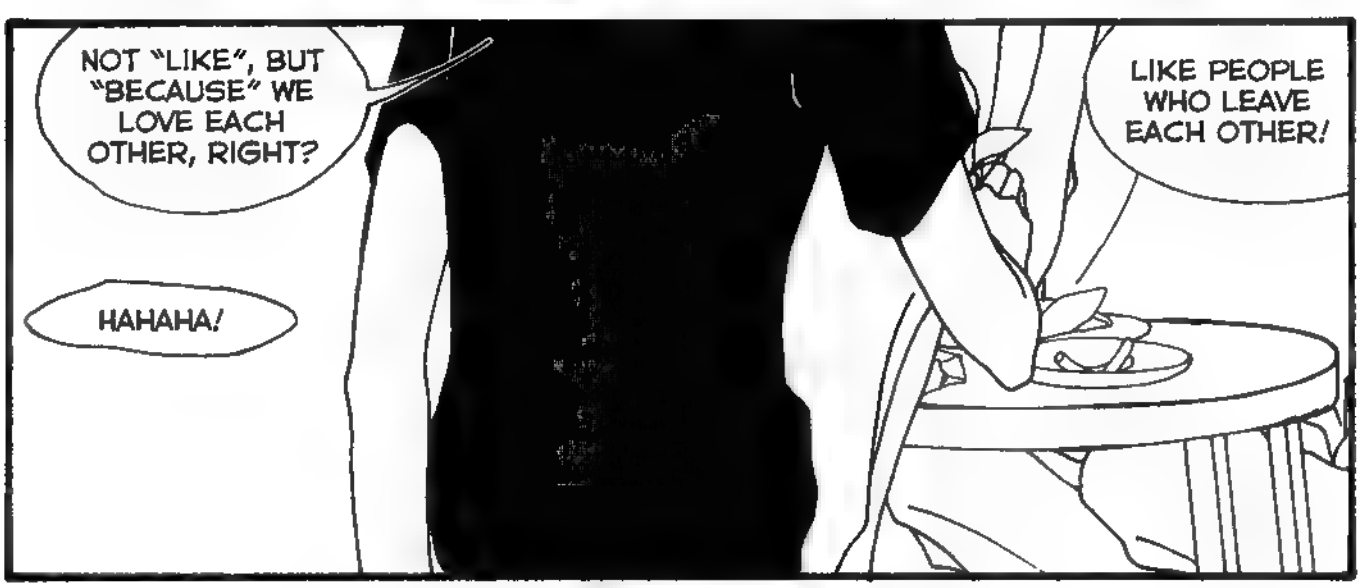
I OFTEN ASK MYSELF WHAT I COULD DO FOR THEM, BUT I HAVE NO ANSWERS AND IT TORMENTS ME.
THE MORE WE HOLD ON, THE MORE WE WANT OUR PARENTS TO BE HAPPY...
THE MORE THEY BECOME WEIGHT ON YOUR SHOULDERS.
HERE, IN THIS HOUSE?
HONESTLY, I DON'T WANT TO LIVE HERE.
NOT ONLY THAT, BUT THIS CITY.
TOKYO OR WHERE EVER, ANYWHERE WOULD BE FINE WITH ME.
WHY?
HUH?
I DON'T KNOW, JUST BECAUSE...

ENDO...
WHAT IF YOU CAME WITH ME TO TOKYO?
I FEEL LIKE GOING IN A TOTALLY UNKNOWN PLACE.
THAT'S WHY I GOTTA FIND SOMETHING TO DO UNDER PRETEXT TO LEAVE...
THAT'S TRUE... WHY NOT GO TO TOKYO?
ESPECIALLY WITH ME...
WHY NOT...

THAT WOULD BE GREAT!
BOTH OF US IN TOKYO!
YES...

WHEN WE'LL HAVE TO GO SOMEWHERE SEPERATELY, OR BEFORE GOING TO BED, WE WON'T HAVE TO SAY "GOODBYE"...
BUT "SEE YOU LATER" OR EVEN "GOOD NIGHT."

IF WE'D LIVE TO-GETHER, WE COULD SPLIT THE RENT.


NOT "LIKE", BUT "BECAUSE" WE LOVE EACH OTHER, RIGHT?
HAHAHA!
LIKE PEOPLE WHO LEAVE EACH OTHER!

We laughed. And like it was the most natural thing in the world, we kissed. And kissed some more.

That odor took over me.

And I understood that I loved Masami, that I loved her so much that that love was bigger than me...

Masami's hair had the slight perfume of shampoo, and little by little, I could only smell her odor...

GOOD NIGHT.

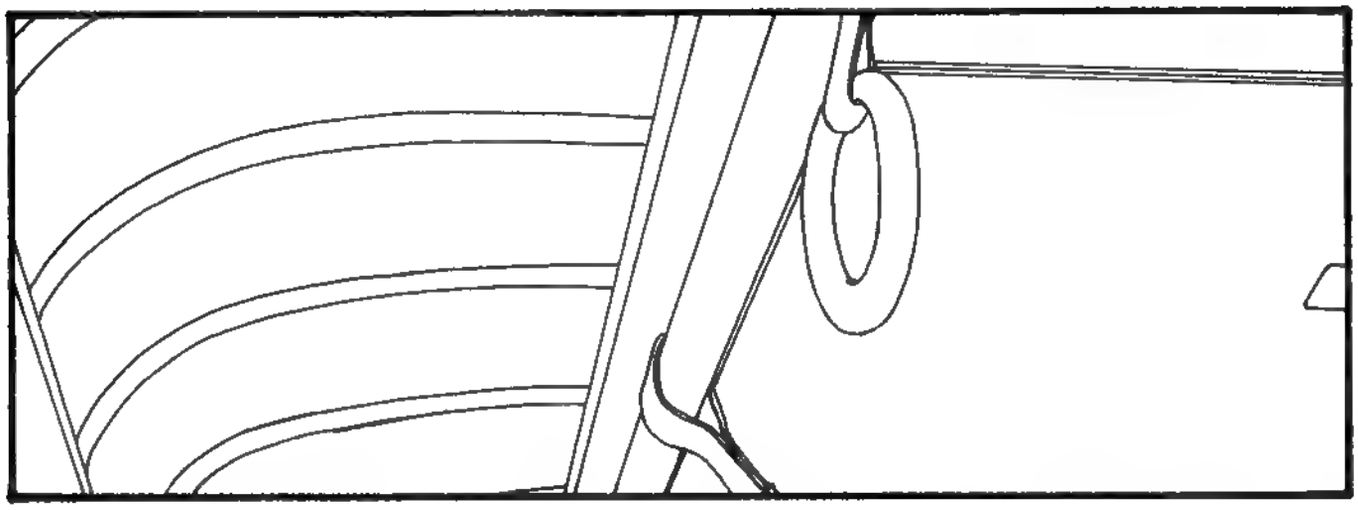
IT'S GREAT THAT YOU'RE HERE.

YOU KNOW, KIRISHIMA...

HMM?

Late that night, when I was half asleep,
I had the impression that I heard the phone ring.

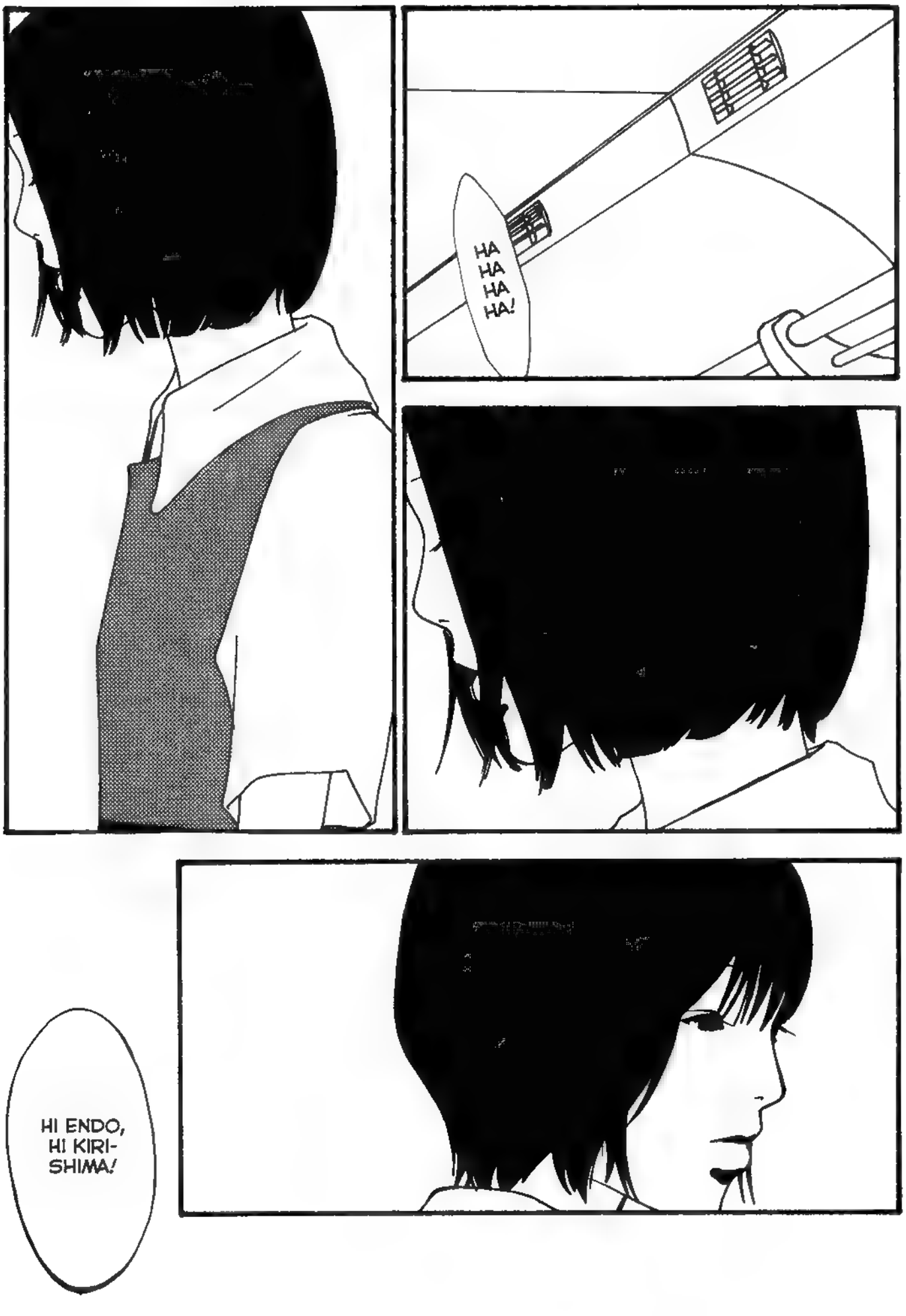
Chapter 5



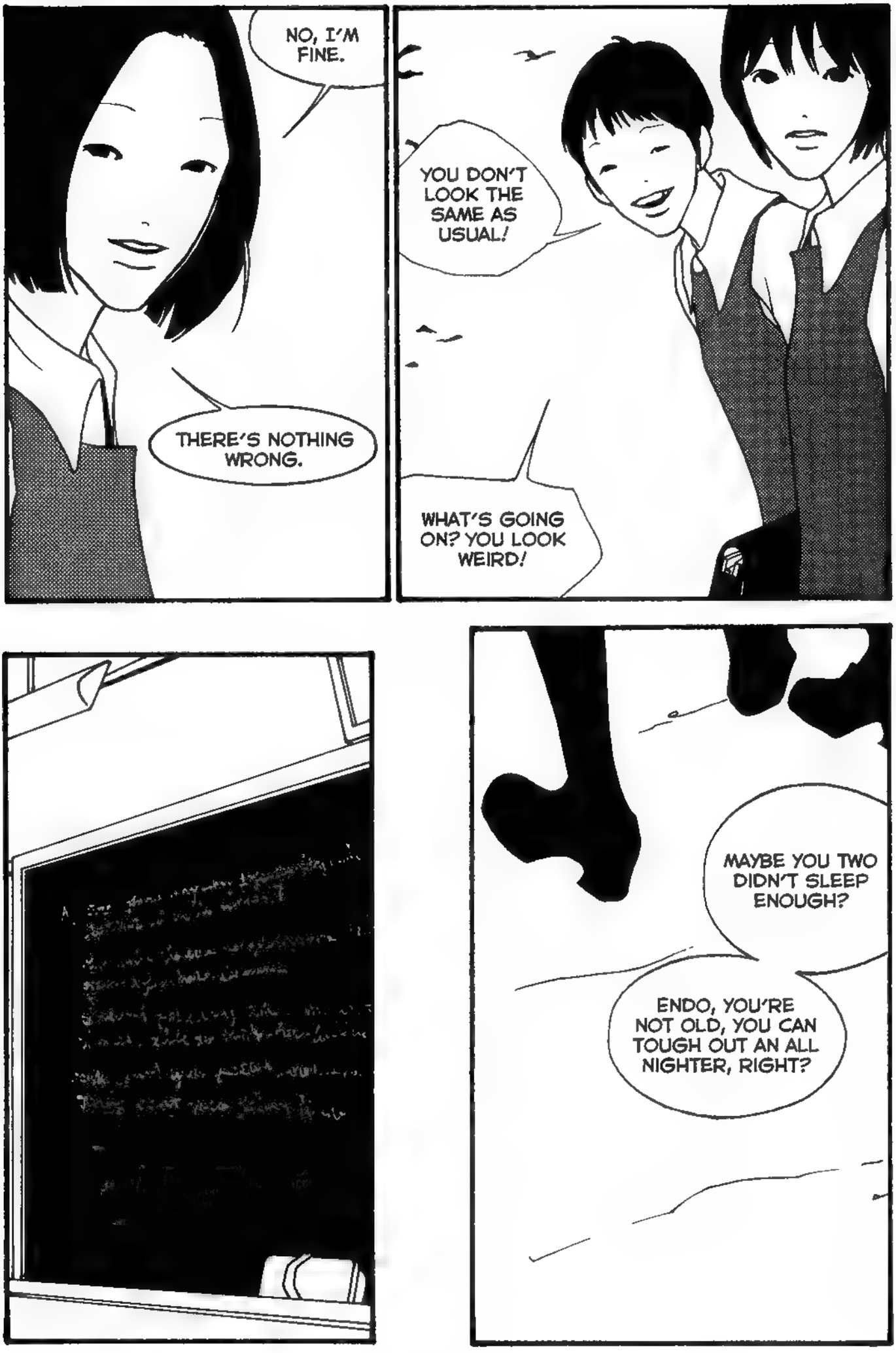
WHAT'S WRONG?

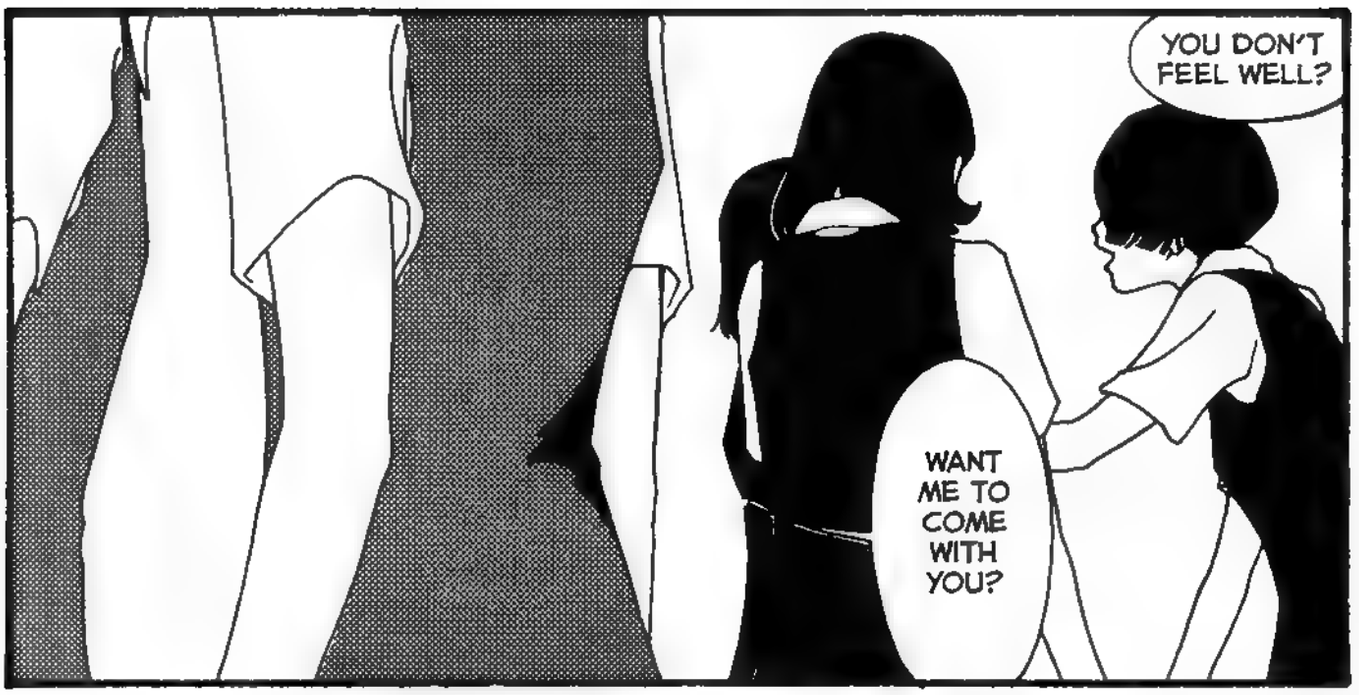
YOU DON'T SEEM TOO HOT TODAY.

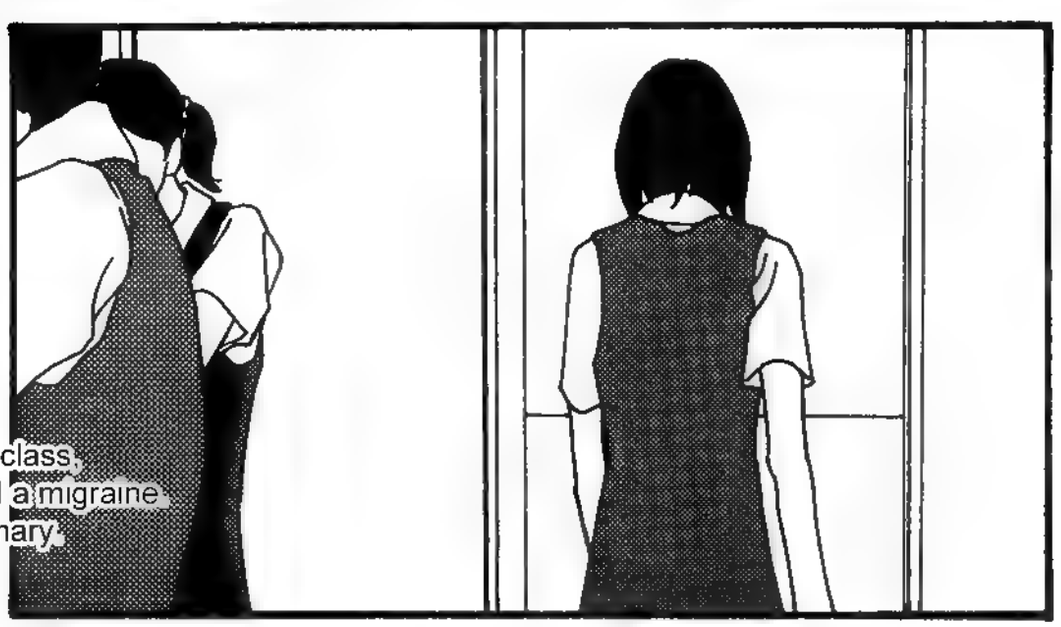
YOU'RE NOT SAYING ANYTHING, WHAT'S UP?
DOES IT HURT SOME-WHERE?
REALLY?
NO, I'M FINE.
I'M JUST SLEEPY, THAT'S ALL...
NO, NO.
I'M KINDA CALM IN THE MORNING...
I TAKE SOME TIME TO GET GOING.
SORRY.


HA HA HA HA!
HI ENDO, HI KIRI-SHIMA!

BY THE WAY, KIRISHIMA, DON'T YOU USUALLY TAKE THE TRAIN?
I SLEPT AT ENDO'S.
HEY!
WE WERE IN THE SAME BUS!
AH, SO THAT'S WHY!
...
ENDO...?


NO, I'M FINE.
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG.
YOU DON'T LOOK THE SAME AS USUAL!
WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU LOOK WEIRD!
MAYBE YOU TWO DIDN'T SLEEP ENOUGH?
ENDO, YOU'RE NOT OLD, YOU CAN TOUGH OUT AN ALL NIGHTER, RIGHT?

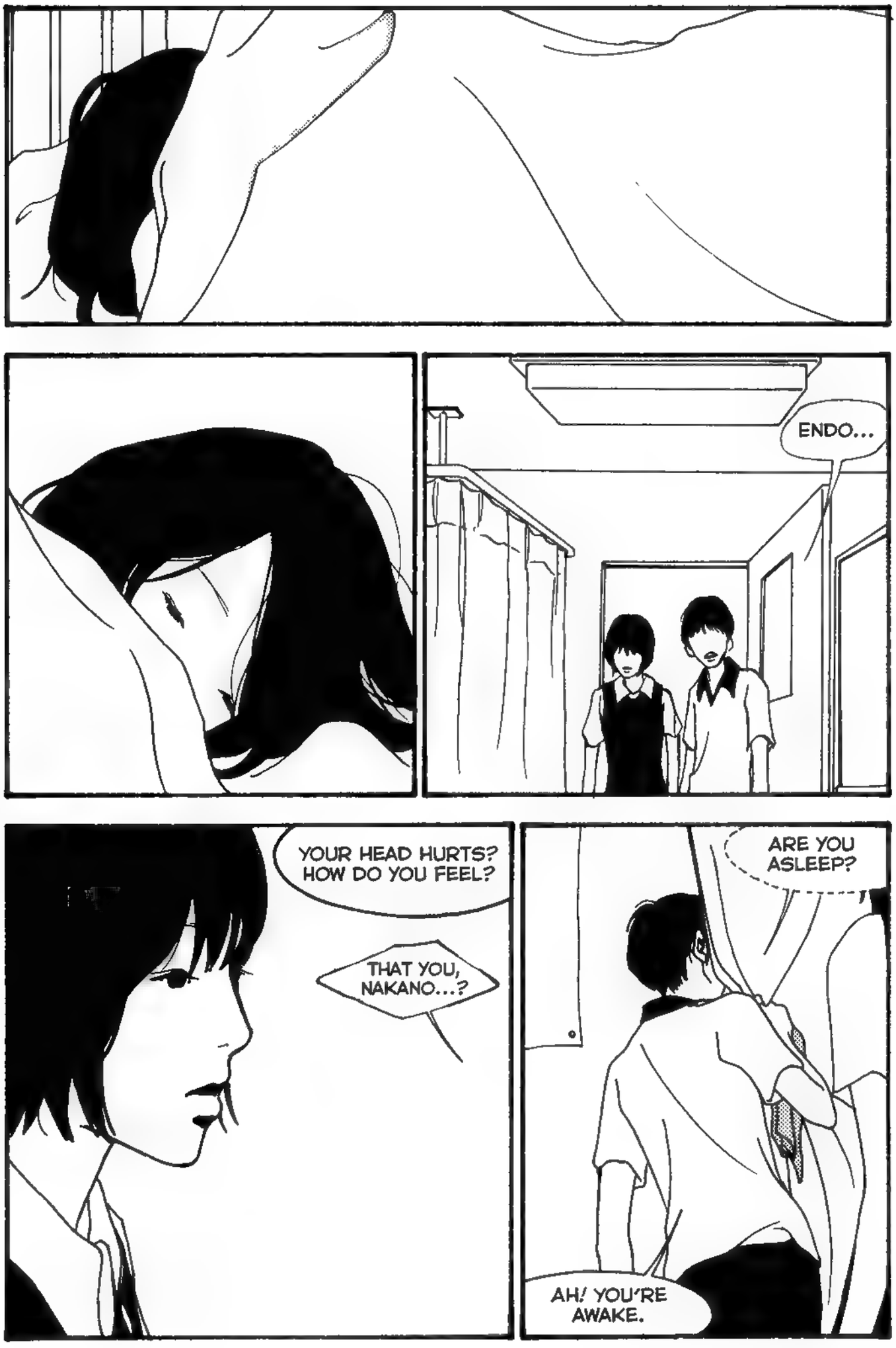




After the first hour of class,
Masami said she had a migraine.
She went to the infirmary.

ENDO'S NOT DOING TOO WELL?

MAYBE...
OR MAYBE I TIRED HER OUT?
YEAH, IT'D BE WEIRD TO GET THE FLU IN THE MIDDLE OF SUMMER.
SHE SAID SHE HAD A HEADACHE.
THE FLU?
AND WE CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE INFIRMARY'S AIR CONDI-TIONING!
THINK WE CAN?
WANNA GO SEE HER?
SURE, JUST FOR A LITTLE.
I'LL BE GONE FOR A FEW MINUTES, I HAVE TO GO TO THE TEACHER'S LOUNGE.
IF SHE'S SLEEP-ING, DON'T WAKE HER UP.
OF COURSE, MA'AM.
YOU CAME TO SEE ENDO?
SHE'S IN THE ROOM.

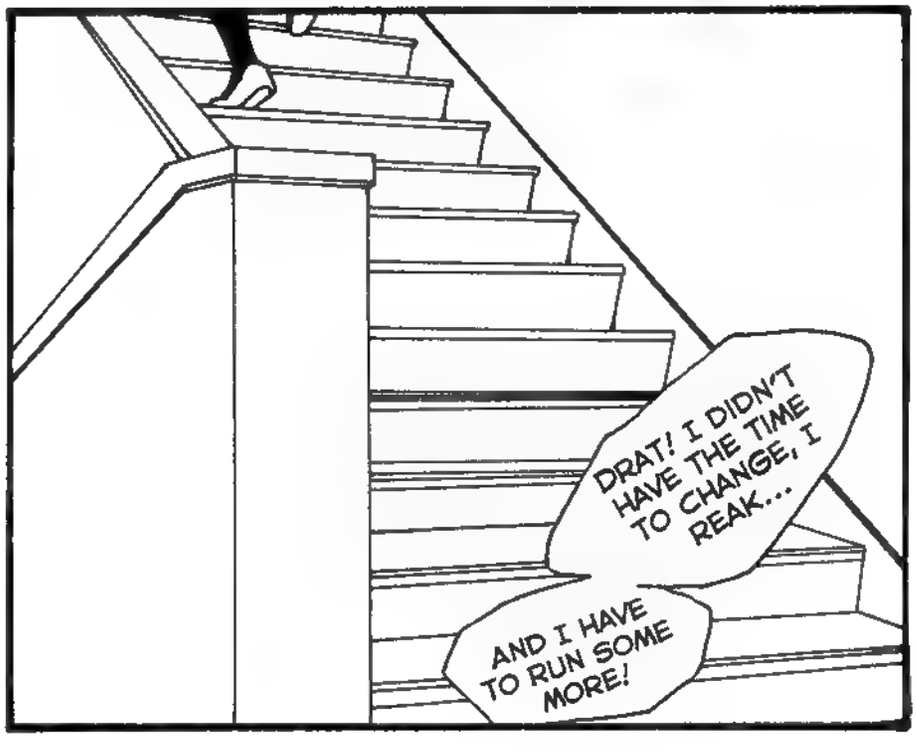

ENDO...
YOUR HEAD HURTS? HOW DO YOU FEEL?
THAT YOU, NAKANO...?
ARE YOU ASLEEP?
AH! YOU'RE AWAKE.

YES...
WELL... I'M UNDER THE IM-PRESSION THAT IT'S A LITTLE BIT BECAUSE OF ME IF...
YOU CAME TOO.
AH, KIRI-SHIMA!
NO, OF COURSE NOT!
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT! DON'T WORRY!
IN GYM CLASS, WE HAD TO DO FIFTEEN LAPS IN THIS WEATHER!
COMPLETELY INHUMAN!
NAKANO, YOU CAME FOR THE AIR COND!-TIONER?
OBVIOUSLY!
HAAAA... WE'RE GREAT HERE. IT'S SO COOL!

HEY! YOU TWO ARE STILL HERE?
CLASSES ARE ABOUT TO START!
NO, I'LL BE FEELING BETTER IN AN HOUR.
I'LL GO BACK TO CLASS.
ENDO, WOULD YOU RATHER GO HOME?

ALRIGHT, SEE YOU LATER, ENDO.
HURRY UP AND GET BACK TO CLASS!
YES, MA'AM.
IT'S NOT A GOOD IDEA TO BE LATE FOR THE LAST CLASSES IN THE TRIMES-TER!

"That you, Nakano...?"

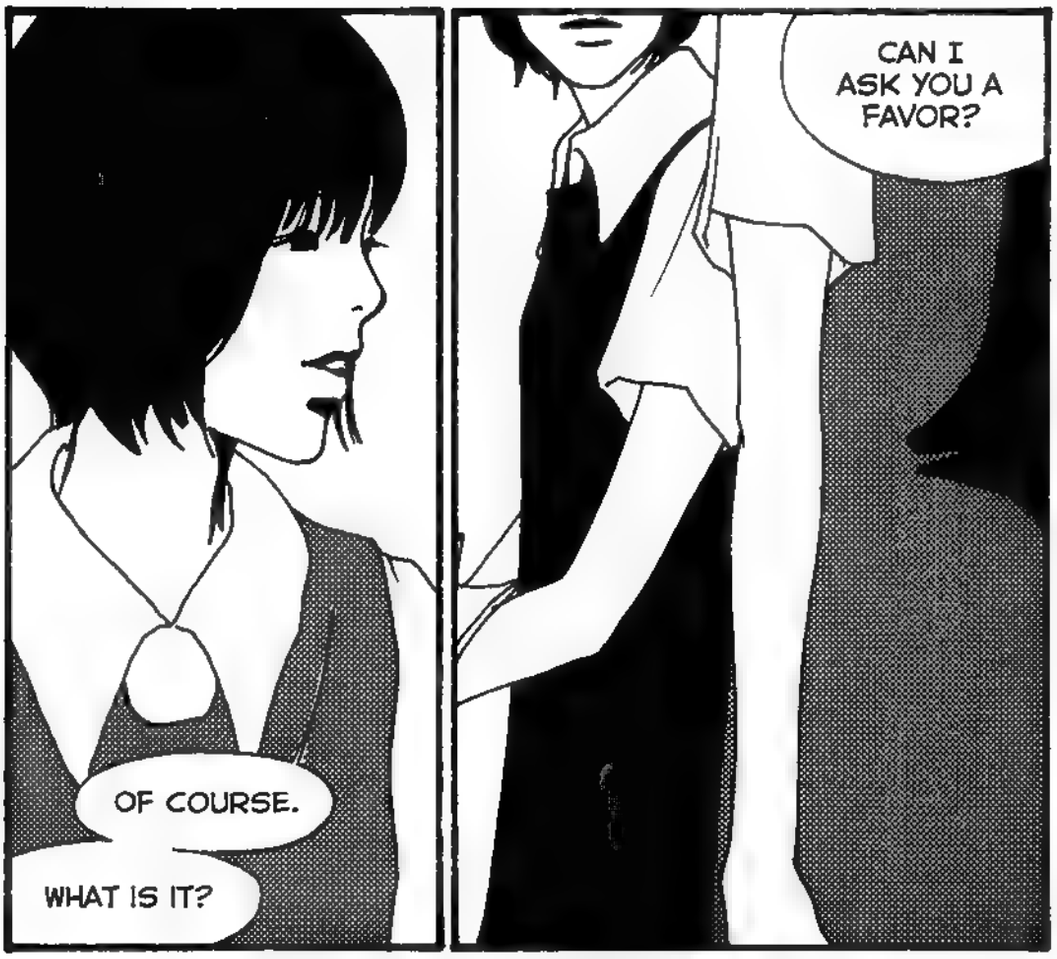


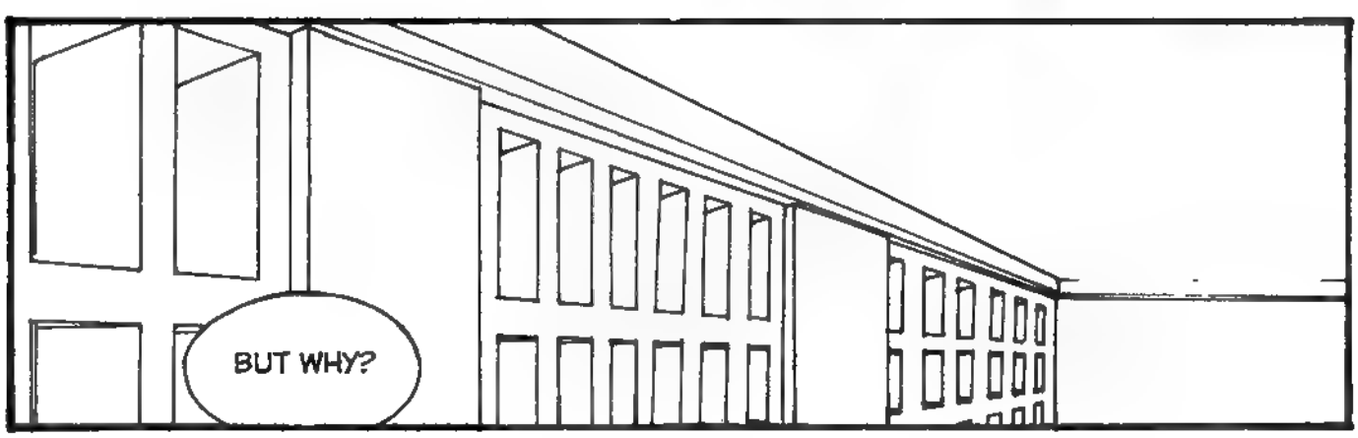
When we entered in the infirmary,
Endo called out “Nakano” first.

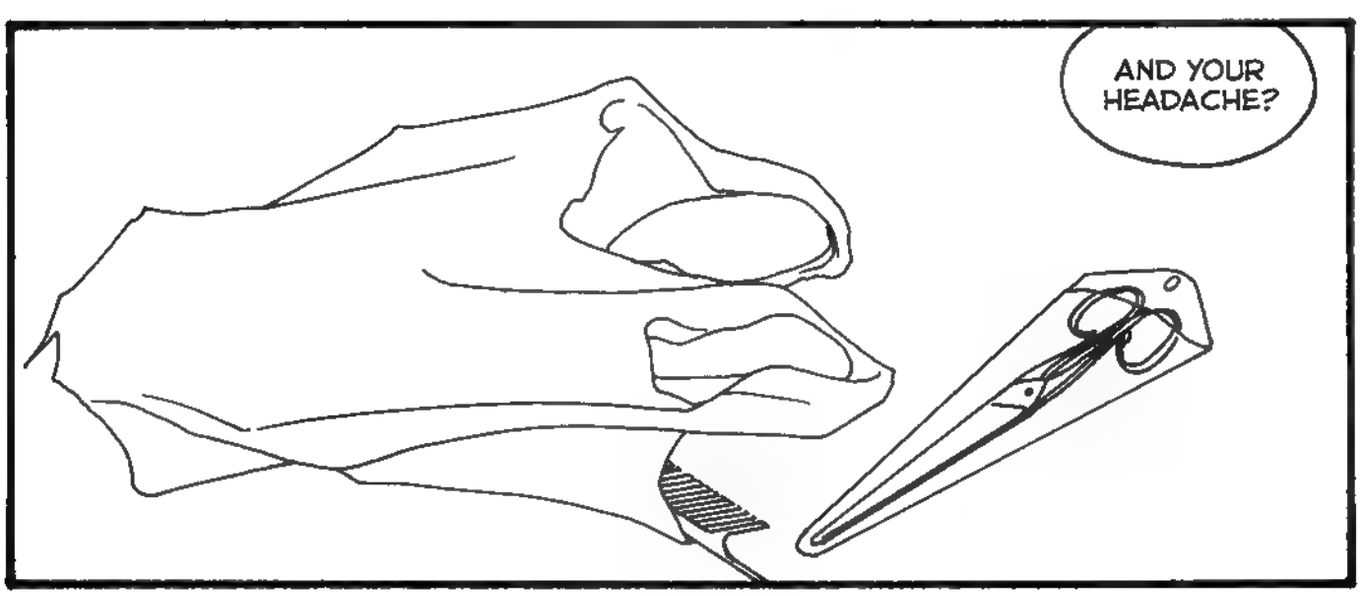
She seemed bothered.
She hadn’t yet noticed me.

And when she saw me,
she suddenly started smiling.

Her face still seemed bothered
but that smile covered it.

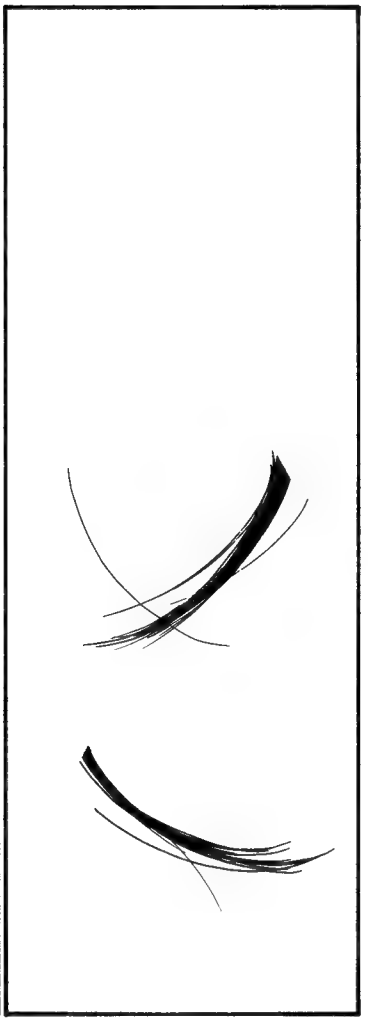

CAN I ASK YOU A FAVOR?
OF COURSE.
WHAT IS IT?


BUT WHY?


AND YOUR HEADACHE?

IT'S FINE...
IN FACT, IT DIDN'T REALLY HURT THAT MUCH.
I HOPE YOU WON'T HOLD IT AGAINST ME.
NOTHING AT ALL.
NO...
BUT WHAT WAS WRONG, THEN?
REALLY?
THAT'S GREAT!

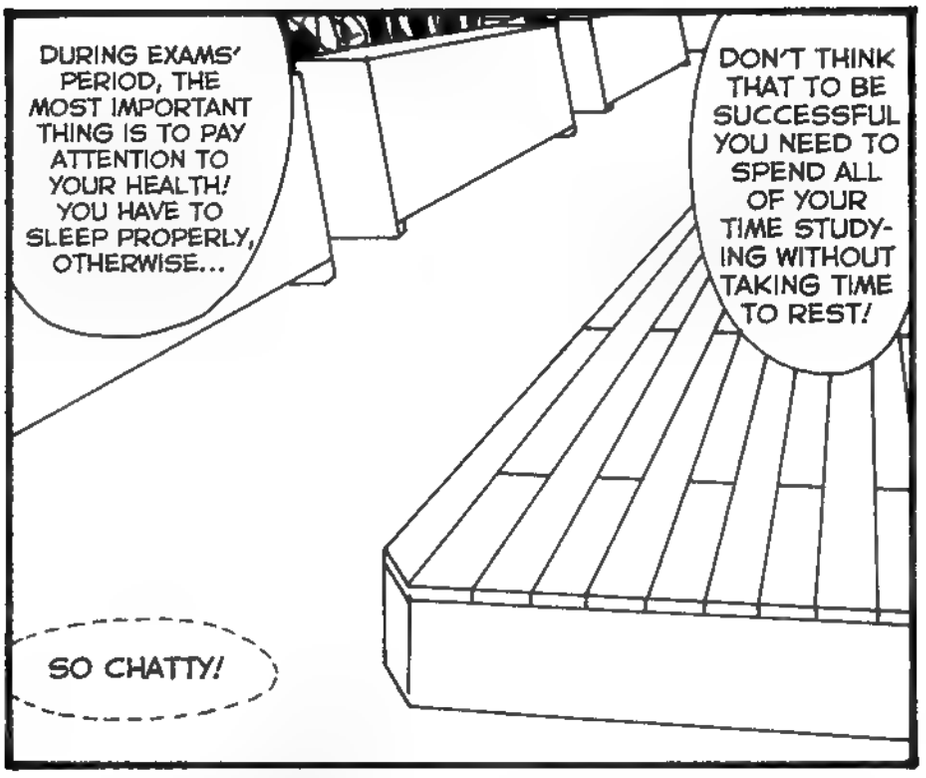
HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS?
NO, IT MAKES ME HOT!
WHAT A SHAME!



With the sweat, some hair were sticking to Masami's neck. I had difficulties getting a hold of them.

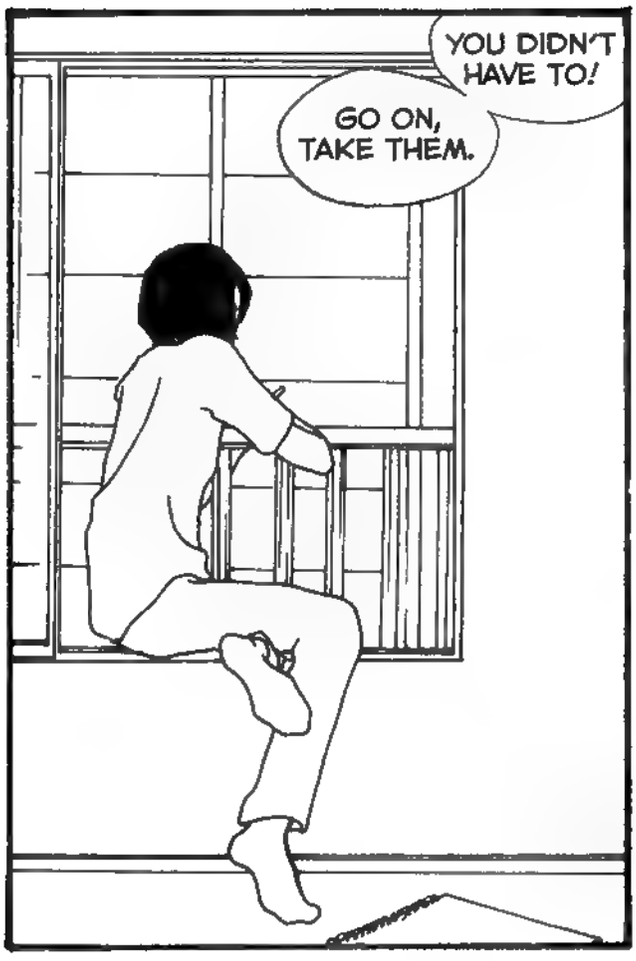
I could see her face sideways. The form of her cheaks, I was imagining her unperturbed expression.

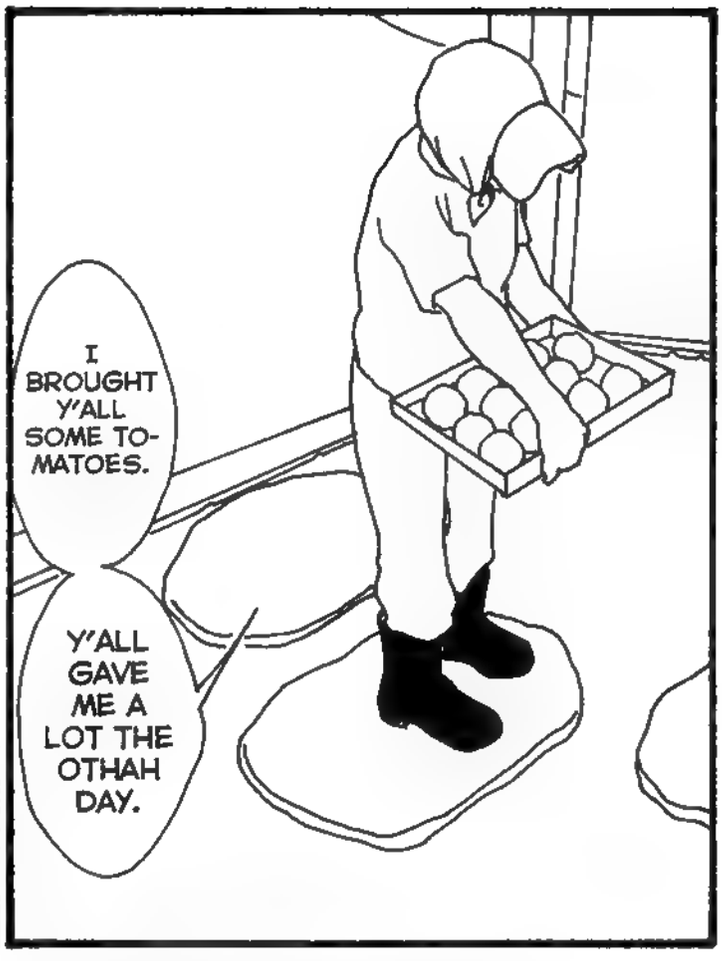
YOU LOOK LIKE A LITTLE GIRL!
ENDO...
TELL YOURSELVES THAT IT'S YOUR FUTURE THAT IS IN PLAY WITH YOUR STUDIES!


DURING EXAMS' PERIOD, THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR HEALTH! YOU HAVE TO SLEEP PROPERLY, OTHERWISE...
DON'T THINK THAT TO BE SUCCESSFUL YOU NEED TO SPEND ALL OF YOUR TIME STUDYING WITHOUT TAKING TIME TO REST!
SO CHATTY!

The day after I cut her hair was the day the ceremony for the conclusion of the trimester was held, but Masami didn't come to school.

Chapter 6



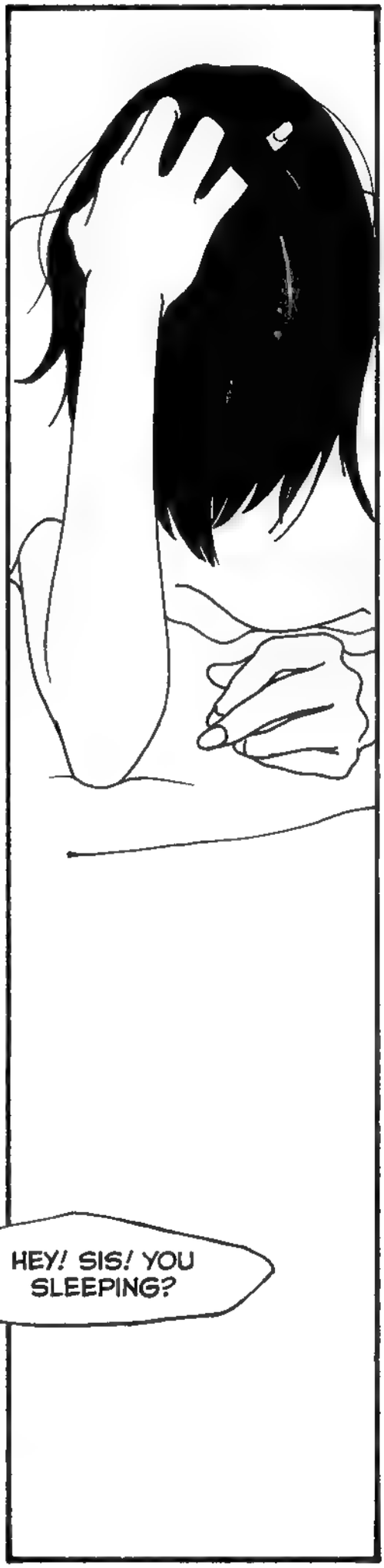


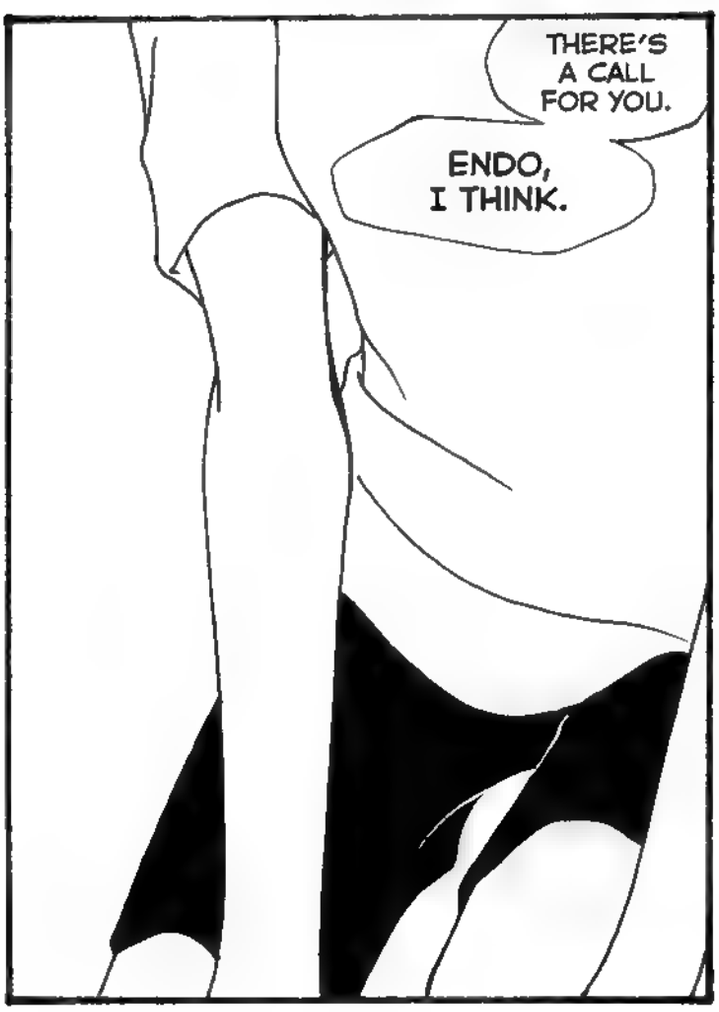
It was the last day of the trimester. I called Masami. Her mother told me that she wasn't there. And then, I don't know why, she apologized profusely.

The month of August came. I still haven't heard anything from Masami.

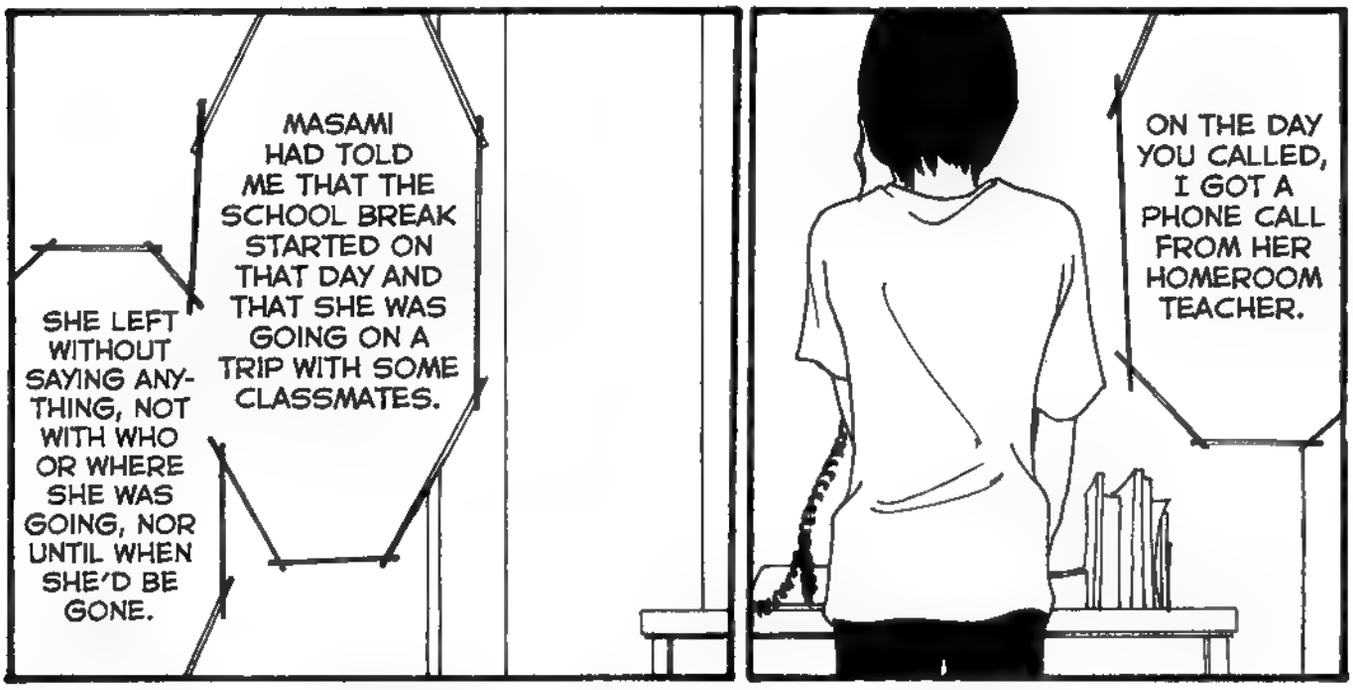
What could she be doing?

WAKE UP!
HMM... WHAT?

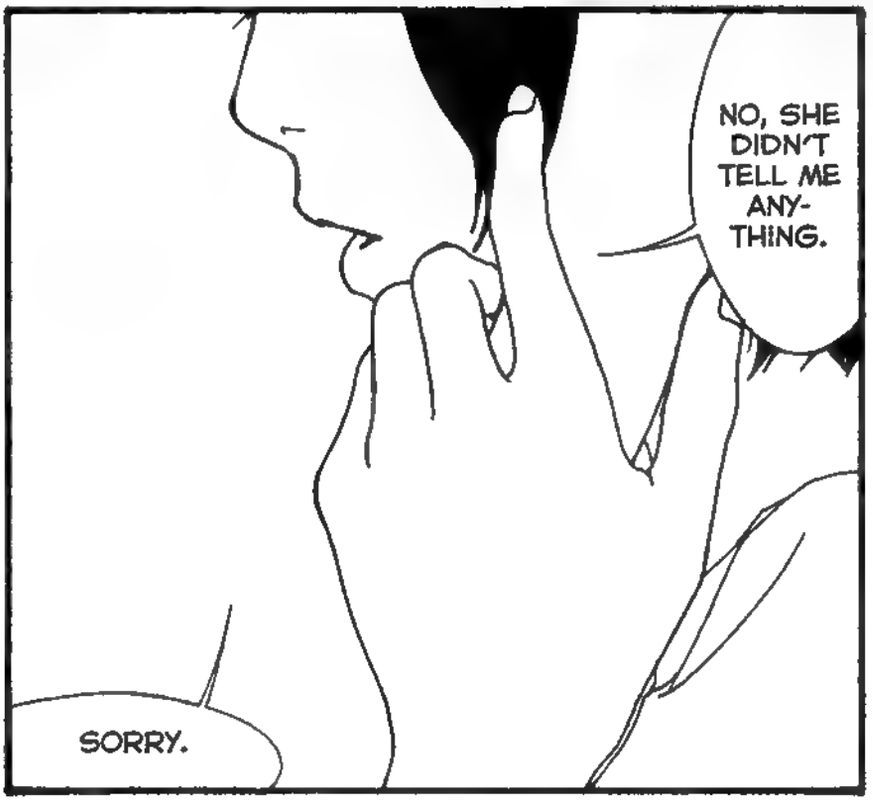

HEY! SIS! YOU SLEEPING?


THERE'S A CALL FOR YOU.
ENDO, I THINK.

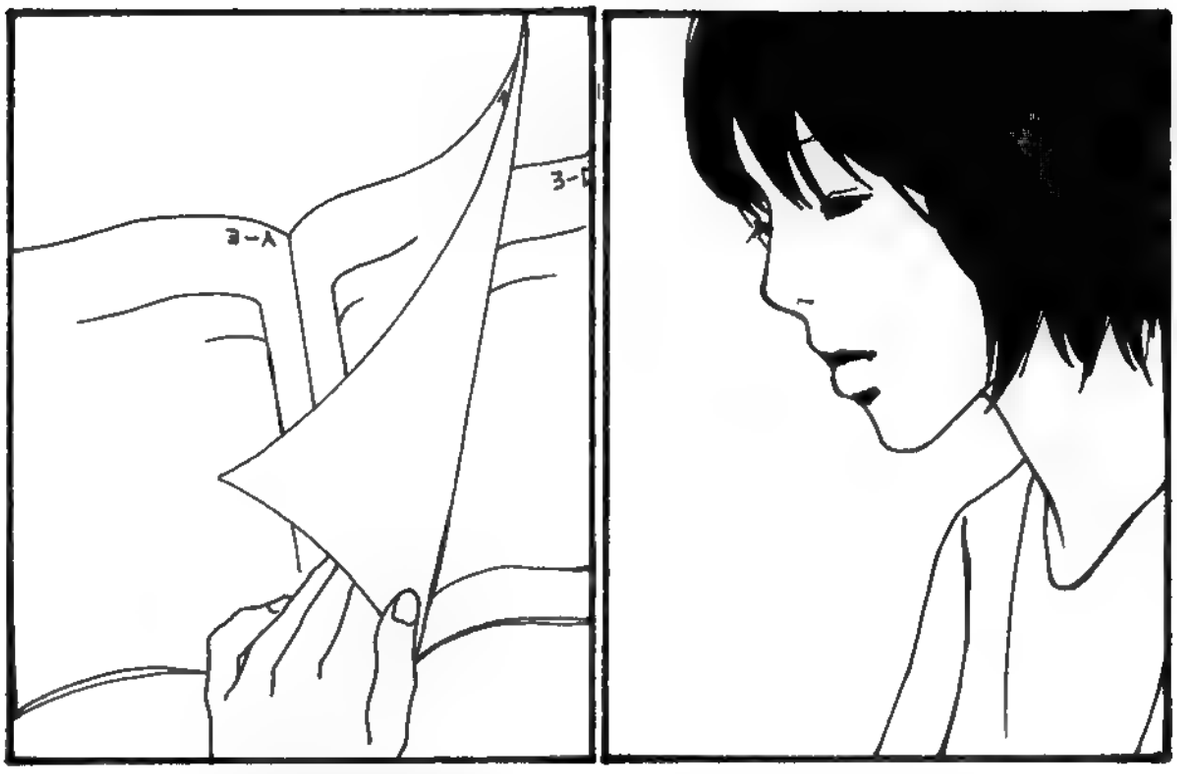
ENDO?
AH, MISS KIRISHIMA?
EXCUSE ME?
AH... YES, THAT'S ME.
... I'M MASAMI'S MOTHER.
UMM...
MASAMI HASN'T COME HOME IN THE LAST FEW DAYS.
HI!
PLEASE EXCUSE ME FOR BOTH-ERING YOU. MASAMI...

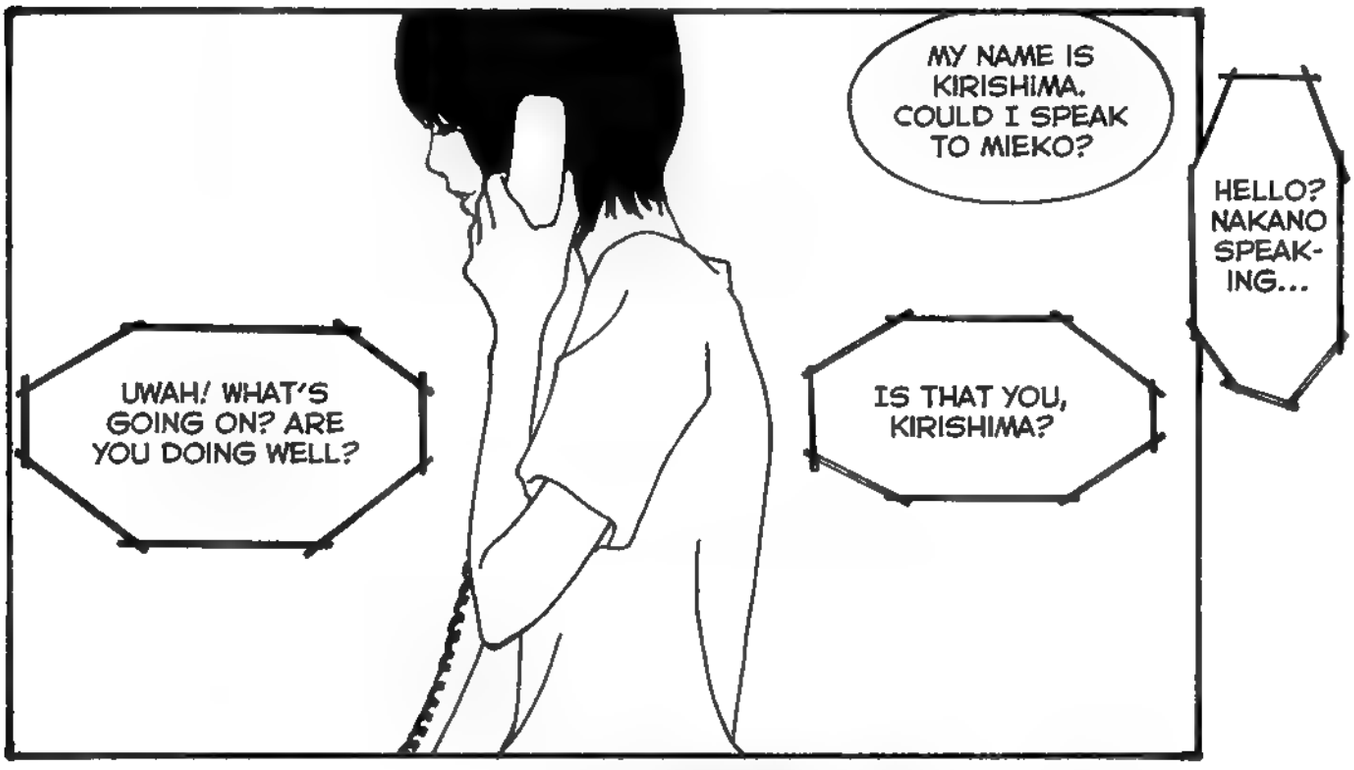

MASAMI HAD TOLD ME THAT THE SCHOOL BREAK STARTED ON THAT DAY AND THAT SHE WAS GOING ON A TRIP WITH SOME CLASSMATES.
SHE LEFT WITHOUT SAYING ANY-THING, NOT WITH WHO OR WHERE SHE WAS GOING, NOR UNTIL WHEN SHE'D BE GONE.
ON THE DAY YOU CALLED, I GOT A PHONE CALL FROM HER HOMEROOM TEACHER.

I knew absolutely nothing.

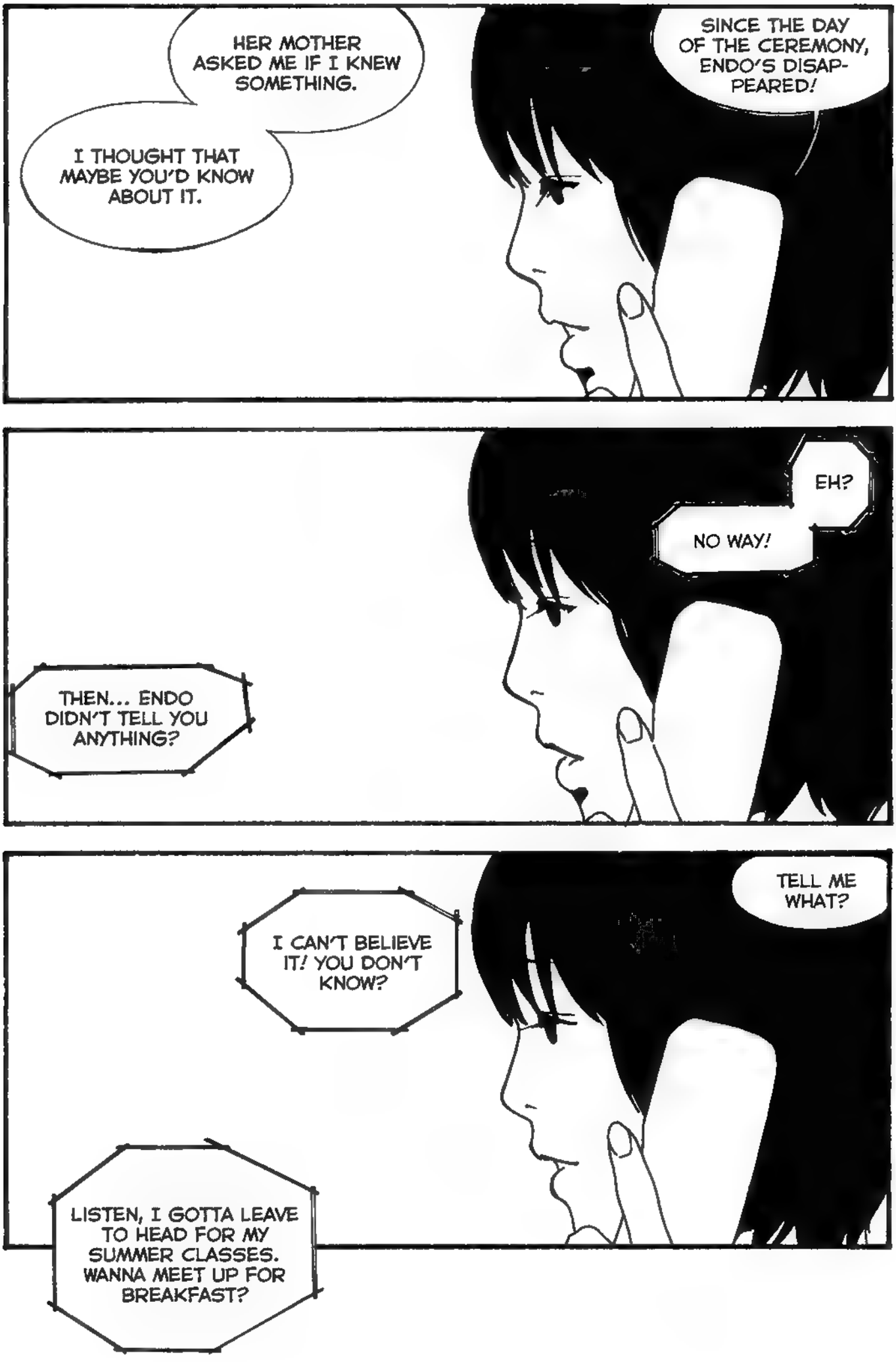


I wasn't up to date on anything.




MY NAME IS KIRISHIMA. COULD I SPEAK TO MIEKO?
HELLO? NAKANO SPEAK-ING...
UWAH! WHAT'S GOING ON? ARE YOU DOING WELL?
IS THAT YOU, KIRISHIMA?

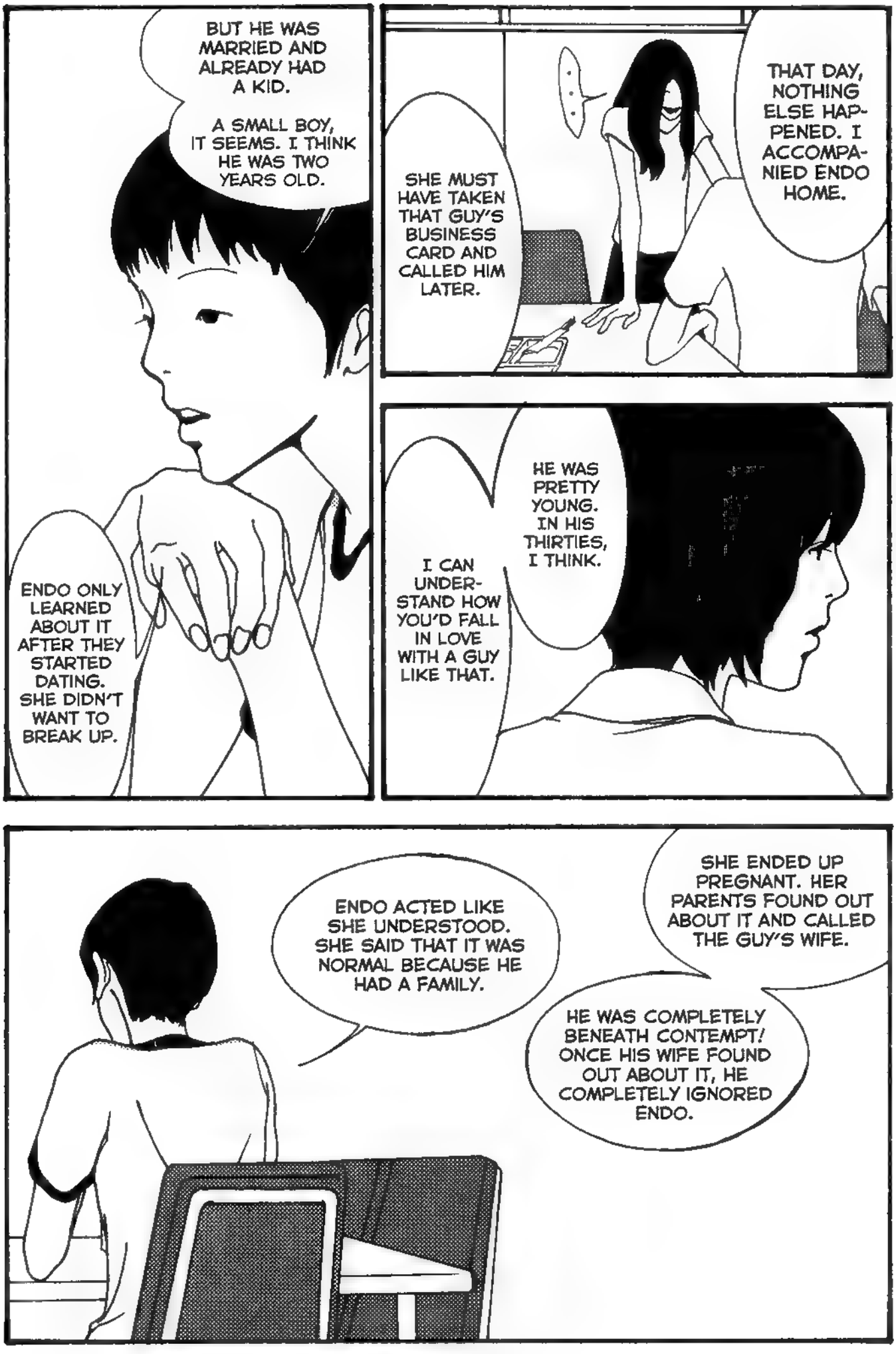
YES.
WELL... ENDO'S MOTHER JUST CALLED.
NO WAY!
WELL?


HER MOTHER ASKED ME IF I KNEW SOMETHING.
I THOUGHT THAT MAYBE YOU'D KNOW ABOUT IT.
SINCE THE DAY OF THE CEREMONY, ENDO'S DISAP-PEARED!
EH?
NO WAY!
THEN... ENDO DIDN'T TELL YOU ANYTHING?
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! YOU DON'T KNOW?
TELL ME WHAT?
LISTEN, I GOTTA LEAVE TO HEAD FOR MY SUMMER CLASSES. WANNA MEET UP FOR BREAKFAST?

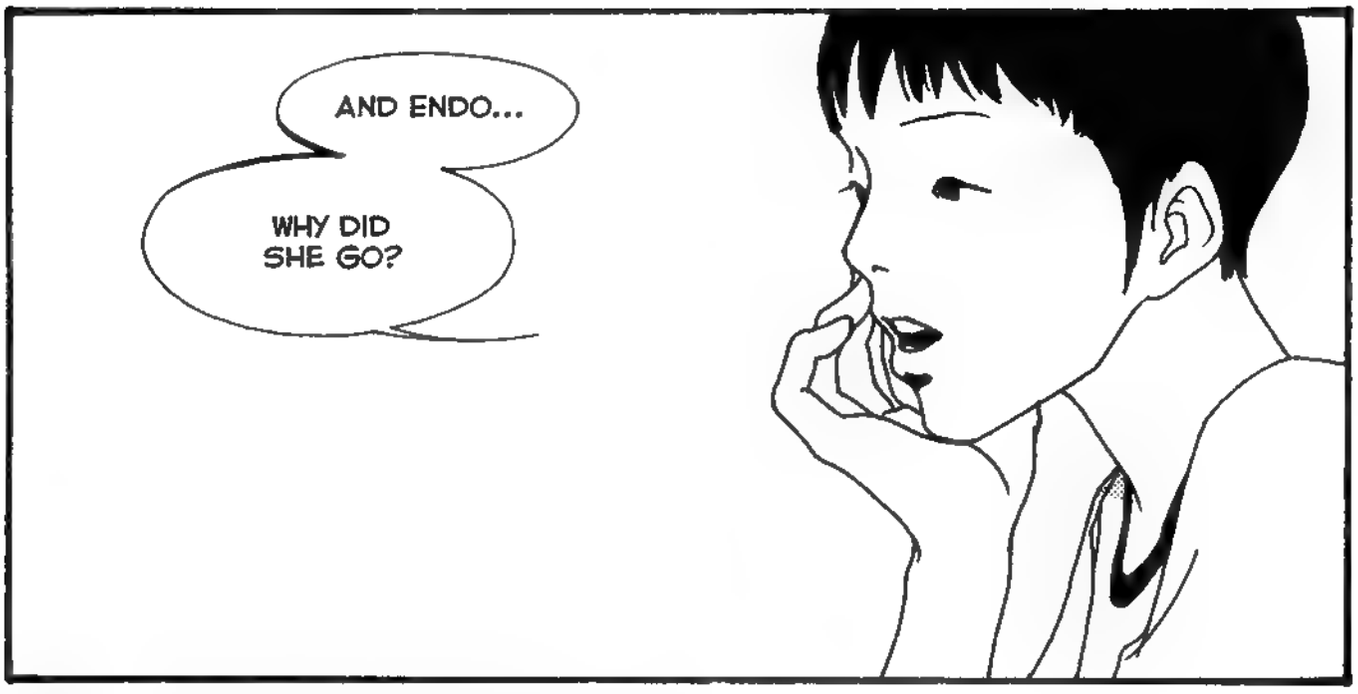
NO TROUBLE FINDING THE PLACE?
YEAH, IT WAS FINE.
I'M GLAD I CAN SEE YOU!
I DON'T KNOW ANYONE HERE.
KIRISHIMA!
DID HER MOTHER...
MISS ENDO, SEEM WORRIED?
SHE WAS TALKING FAST...
LIKE SHE WAS GOING TO START CRYING.
SHE MIGHT HAVE BEEN CRYING.
DID YOU EAT?
NO, I WASN'T HUNGRY.
YOU SHOULDN'T SKIP OUT ON FEEDING YOURSELF! HERE, DRINK THIS.

SHE...
SHE... WENT TO MEET A GUY.
ENDO...
A GUY?
YEAH, THE ONE FROM BEFORE.
YOU DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT EITHER?
OH, SO YOU KNEW?
THAT'S WHY SHE WAS KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL...
I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ELSE.
THE... ABORTION?

FIRST, AROUND THE MONTH OF MAY...
AH YEAH?
WE WENT OUT TO DRINK WITH GIRLS FROM CLASS. ENDO COULDN'T HOLD HER ALCOHOL VERY WELL...
WE LEFT THE BAR. WE WERE CLOSE TO A SHOPPING MALL WHEN SHE STARTED PUKING...
THE GUY WASN'T SAYING ANYTHING. HE TOOK ENDO TO THE SIDE OF THE SIDEWALK AND...
IN HER MOUTH...
HE PUT HIS FINGERS IN HER MOUTH TO HELP HER PUKE!
SO MUCH SO THAT SHE HURLED ON SOME GUY THAT WAS AROUND THERE!
THE BOTTOM OF HIS PANTS WERE DIRTY.
WE WERE EXTREMELY EM-BARASSED. WE TOOK OUT ALL OF THE TISSUES WE HAD AND EXCUSED OURSELVES AS MUCH AS POS-SIBLE.


BUT HE WAS MARRIED AND ALREADY HAD A KID.
A SMALL BOY, IT SEEMS. I THINK HE WAS TWO YEARS OLD.
ENDO ONLY LEARNED ABOUT IT AFTER THEY STARTED DATING. SHE DIDN'T WANT TO BREAK UP.
SHE MUST HAVE TAKEN THAT GUY'S BUSINESS CARD AND CALLED HIM LATER.
THAT DAY, NOTHING ELSE HAPPENED. I ACCOMPANIED ENDO HOME.
I CAN UNDERSTAND HOW YOU'D FALL IN LOVE WITH A GUY LIKE THAT.
HE WAS PRETTY YOUNG. IN HIS THIRTIES, I THINK.
ENDO ACTED LIKE SHE UNDERSTOOD. SHE SAID THAT IT WAS NORMAL BECAUSE HE HAD A FAMILY.
SHE ENDED UP PREGNANT. HER PARENTS FOUND OUT ABOUT IT AND CALLED THE GUY'S WIFE.
HE WAS COMPLETELY BENEATH CONTEMPT! ONCE HIS WIFE FOUND OUT ABOUT IT, HE COMPLETELY IGNORED ENDO.

SHE TOLD ME THAT SHE CALLED HIM.
HIS WIFE HAD GONE INSANE. BATSHIT CRAZY, IS THAT WHAT YOU'D CALL IT?
FOR HER, IT MUST HAVE BEEN EXTREMELY DIFFICULT!
AND THEN, JUST RECENTLY, RIGHT BEFORE THE VACATION...
SHE WOULD TAKE REVENGE BY TORTURING THE POOR BOY.
SHE WOULD BEAT HIM BY KICKING HIM AND PINCHING HIM UNTIL IT LEFT A MARK.
AND AFTER THAT, SHE WOULD SQUEEZE HIM IN HER ARMS, WHILE CRYING AND APOLOGIZING.
ANYWAY, A REAL NUT!
THE GUY'S AN IDIOT. HE CALLED ENDO SAYING HE WANTED TO SEE HER.
IT'S A LITTLE LATE, DON'T YOU THINK?
SO THEY STARTED TALKING ABOUT DIVORCE. THE DAD WANTED TO KEEP THE KID.
IT WASN'T A SURE THING, BUT THEY SEEMED OKAY WITH IT.


AND ENDO...
WHY DID SHE GO?

YOU COULD STILL PERFECTLY UNDERSTAND WITH YOUR HEAD, BUT YOU CAN'T HOLD YOURSELF BACK...
THAT'S HOW IT IS WHEN YOU'RE IN LOVE, RIGHT?
SHE KNOWS HERSELF SUFFICIENTLY ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT BY SEEING HIM AGAIN, SHE'D JUST COMPLICATE THINGS.
AND YET...

LOOKING AT IT THAT WAY...
I KINDA ENVY ENDO A LITTLE, YOU KNOW...

I didn't understand anything.

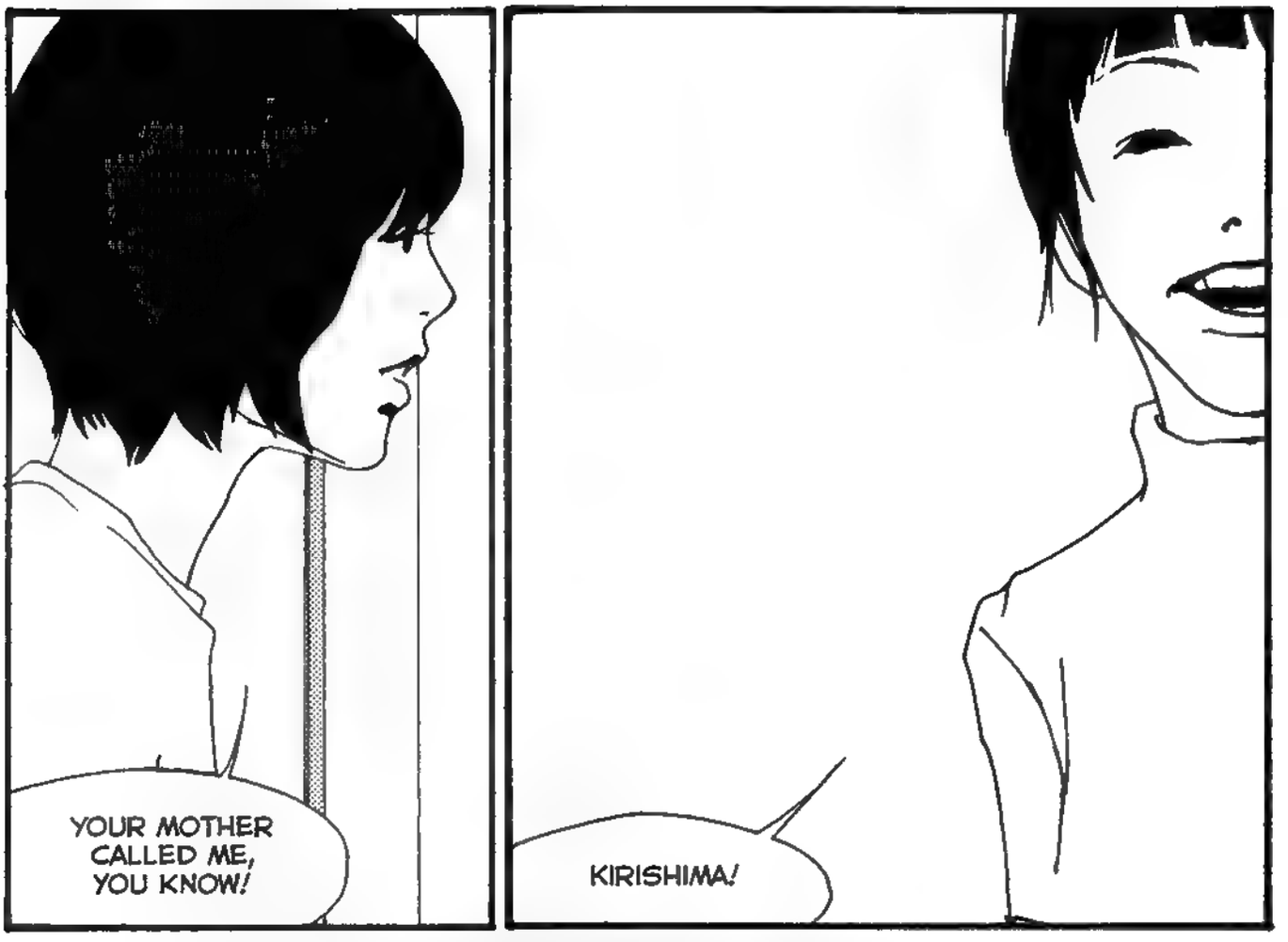
Maybe it was best that I didn't understand.

I was overwhelmed by a weird sentiment that was overflowing and strangling me.

But I didn't know what sentiment it was, nor from where it came...

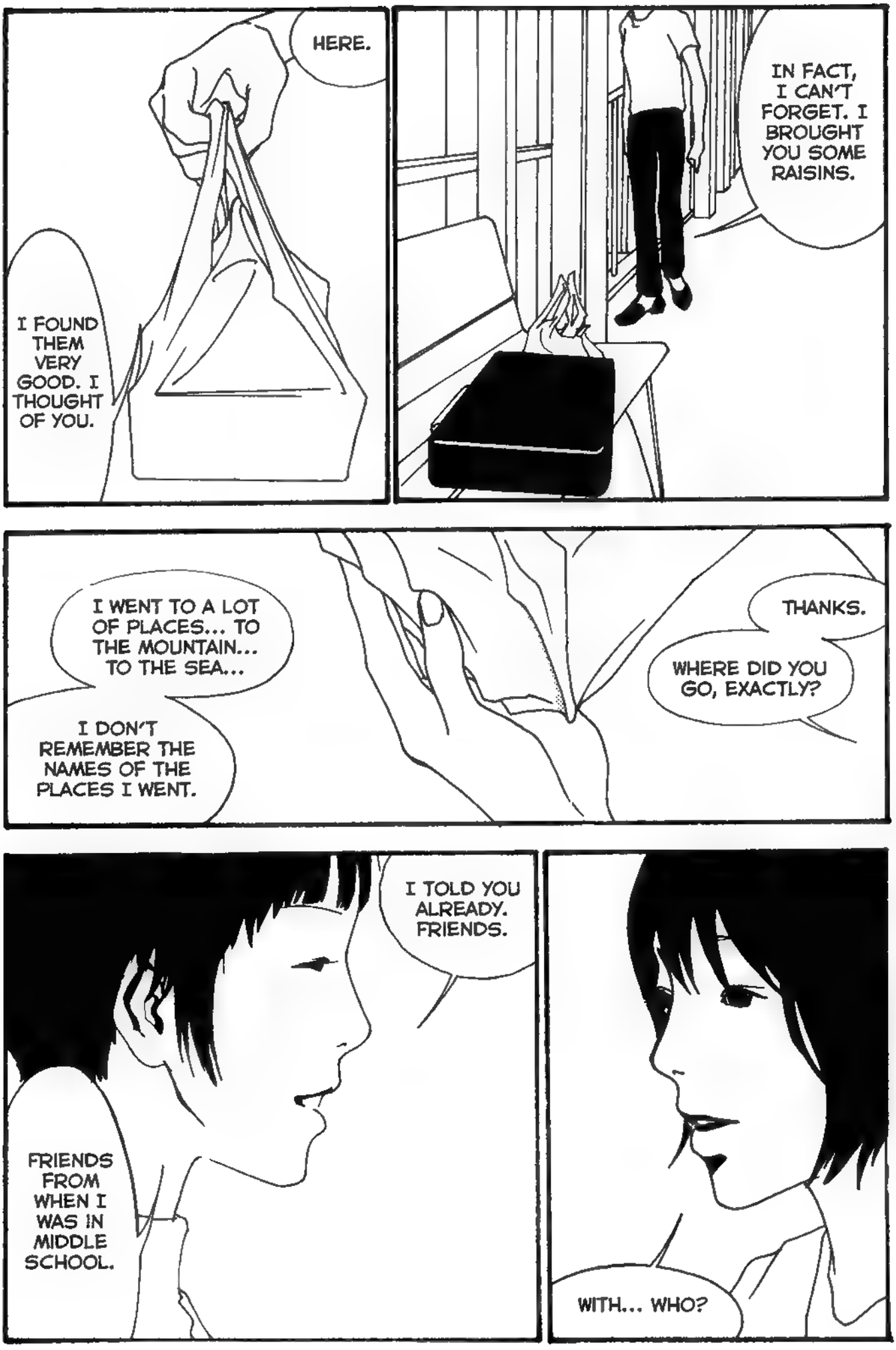
Something was tightening up my throat.

The day after my meeting with Nakano, Masami called me. She was at the train station near where I live.

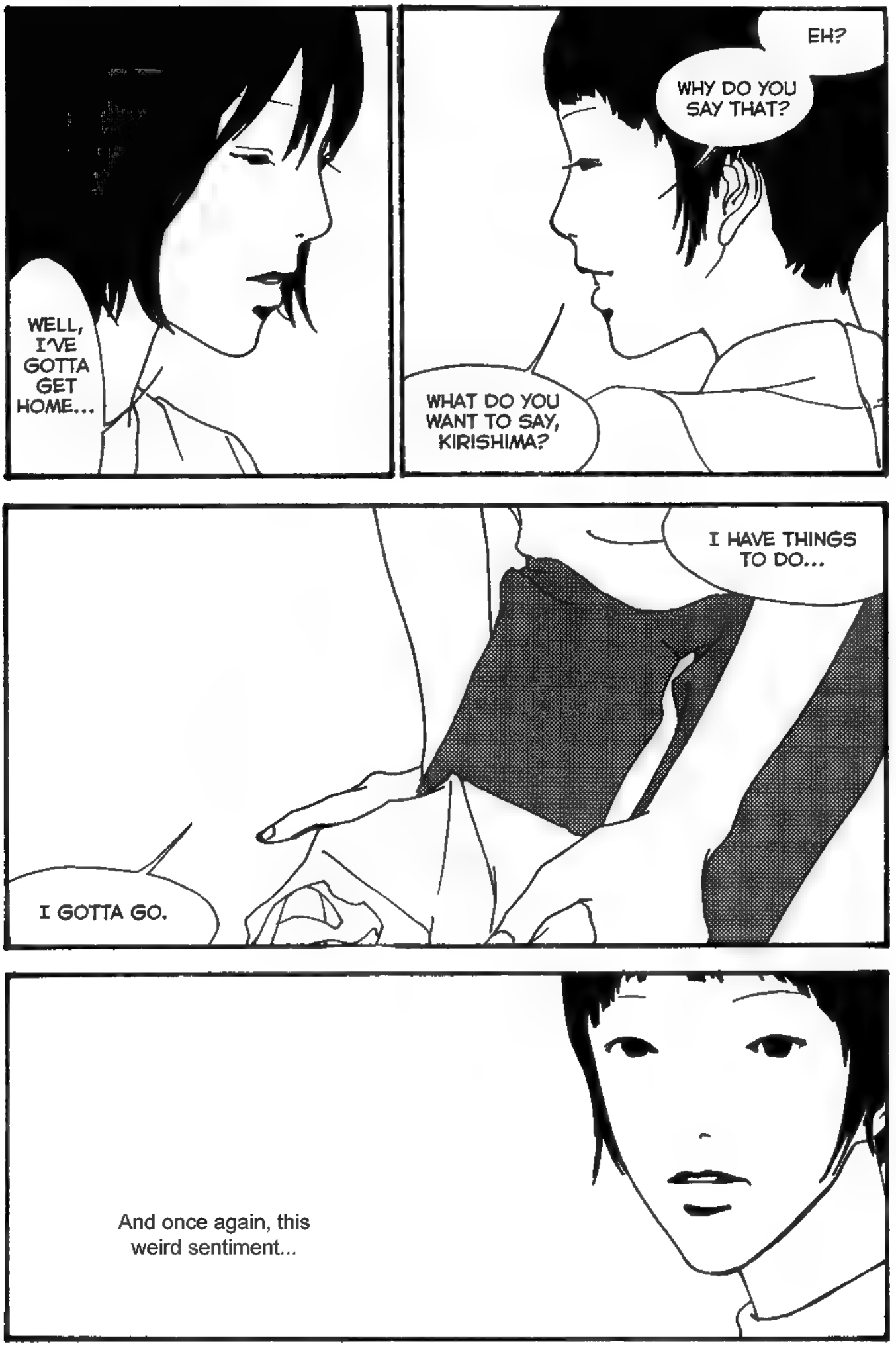

YOUR MOTHER CALLED ME, YOU KNOW!
KIRISHIMA!

TO ASK ME IF I KNEW WHERE YOU HAD GONE.
WHY?

I WAS ON A TRIP WITH SOME FRIENDS.
I DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING TO MY PARENTS.


HERE.
I FOUND THEM VERY GOOD. I THOUGHT OF YOU.
IN FACT, I CAN'T FORGET. I BROUGHT YOU SOME RAISINS.
I WENT TO A LOT OF PLACES... TO THE MOUNTAIN... TO THE SEA...
I DON'T REMEMBER THE NAMES OF THE PLACES I WENT.
THANKS.
WHERE DID YOU GO, EXACTLY?
I TOLD YOU ALREADY. FRIENDS.
FRIENDS FROM WHEN I WAS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL.
WITH... WHO?

ENDO!
YOU SMELL LIKE PERFUME.
A MAN'S PERFUME.
BECAUSE ONE OF MY FRIENDS PUT SOME ON.
HE TOLD ME IT WAS A GIFT FROM HIS OLDER BROTHER.
YOUR FRIEND... ARE YOU SURE HE HAS A BROTHER?


WELL, I'VE GOTTA GET HOME...
EH?
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SAY, KIRISHIMA?
I HAVE THINGS TO DO...
I GOTTA GO.
And once again, this weird sentiment...

This weird, strangling sensation.

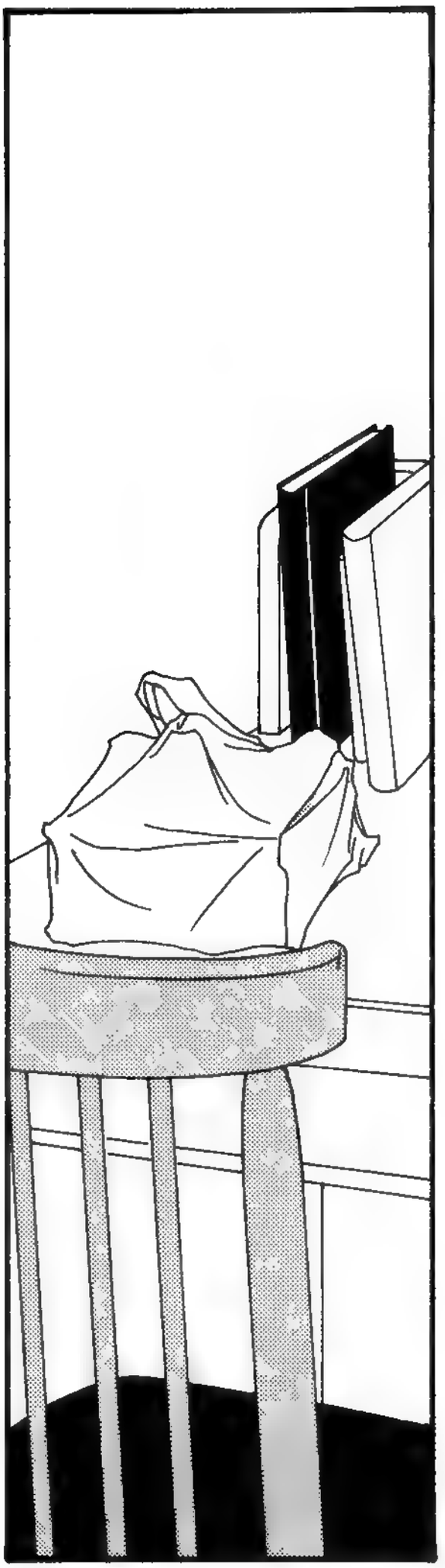
Masami is a girl, she's allowed to fall in love with a boy. She's a girl, she's allowed to!

But why... Why didn't she tell me?

Nakano knows about everything. It's the jealousy towards her that constrains me, that suffocates me and that made me speak so dryly towards Masami.

Deep down, I know what this is.

And I know what unadmitable reason gives me this sentiment.



It's Masami's fault, after all.

Because she didn't need me...

During the long days of the summer break, slowly, day after day, the raisins rot.

Chapter 7

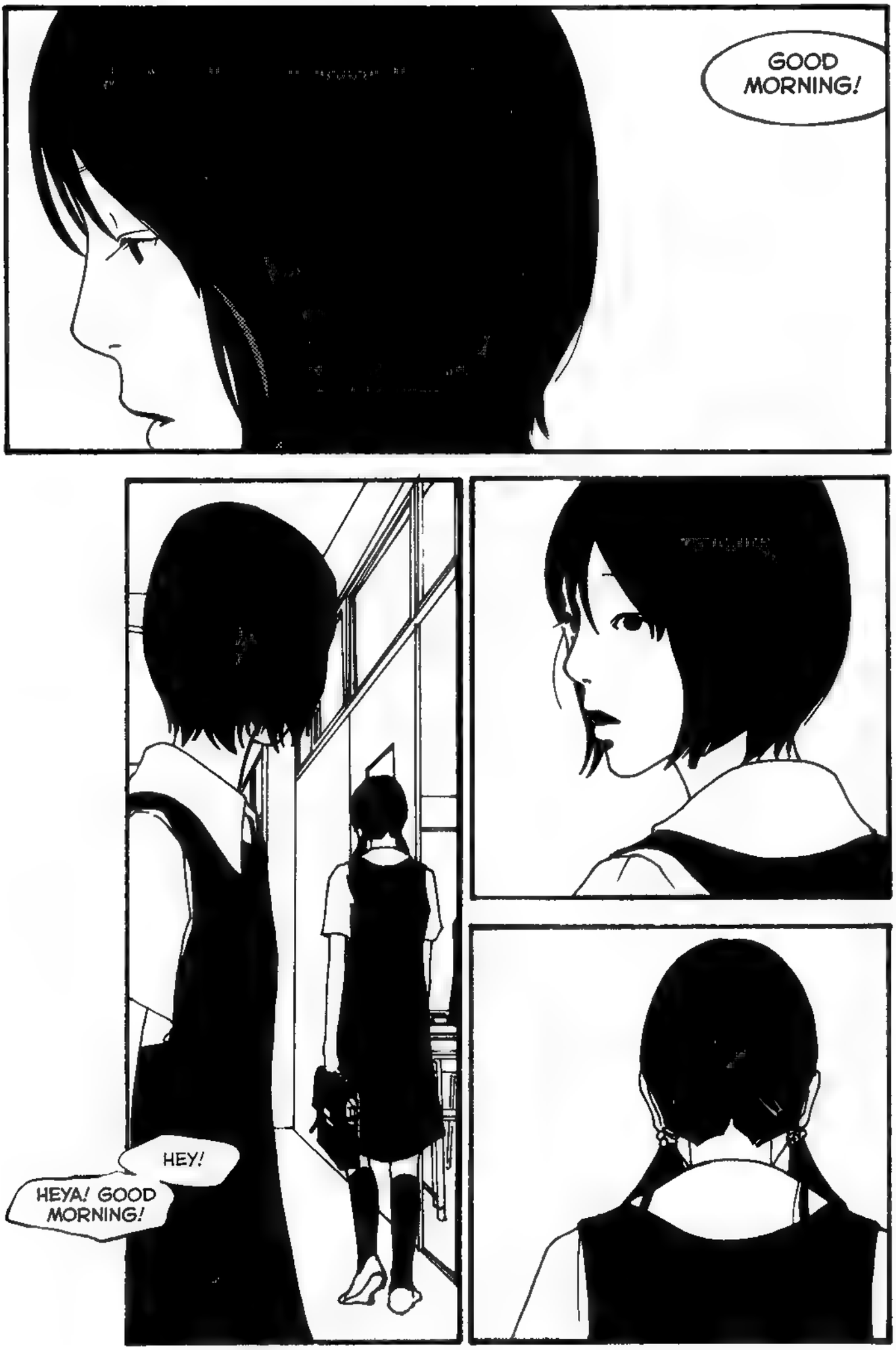
I don't feel like seeing you again, Masami...

Forgive me!

I don't want to show myself to you anymore. I'm too lamentable.

I don't want to constantly compare myself to others. It's too sad, too pitiful.

Forgive me. But I still love you...


GOOD MORNING!
HEY!
HEYA! GOOD MORNING!

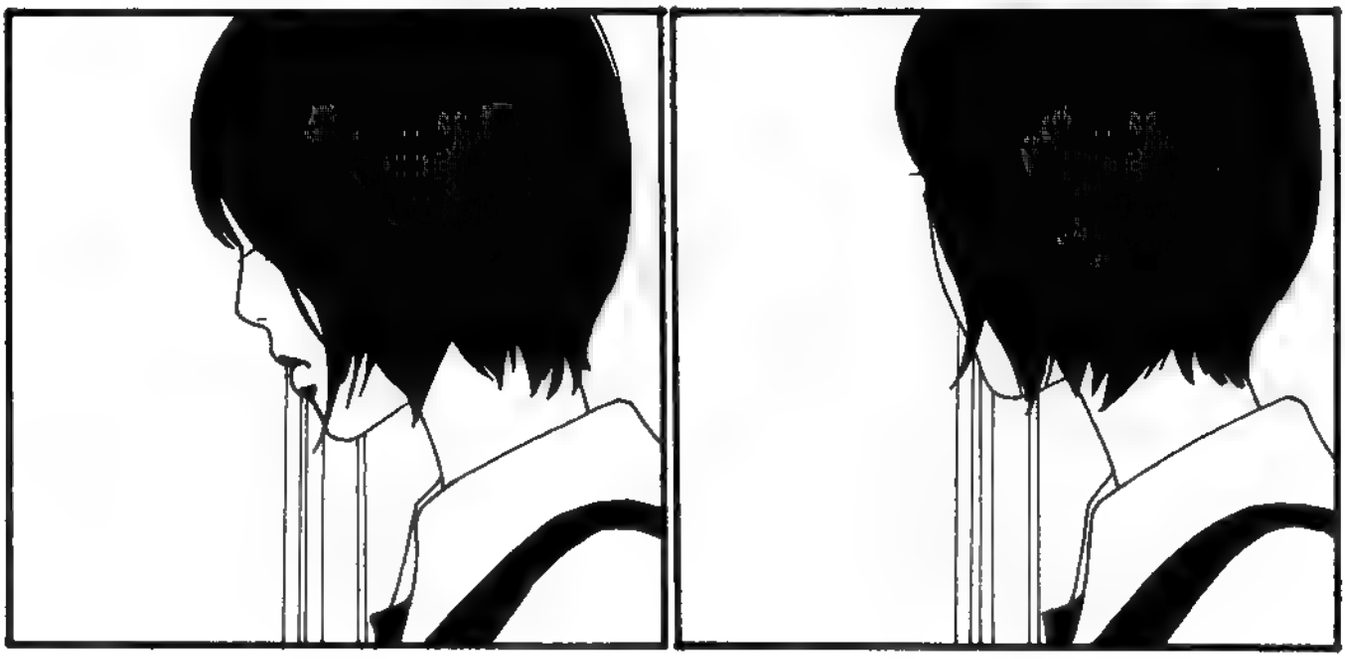
UWAH! YOU'RE SO TANNED! WHAT DID YOU DO?
WHERE'D YOU GO? THE SEA?
WITH YOUR BOYFRIEND? NO WAY!

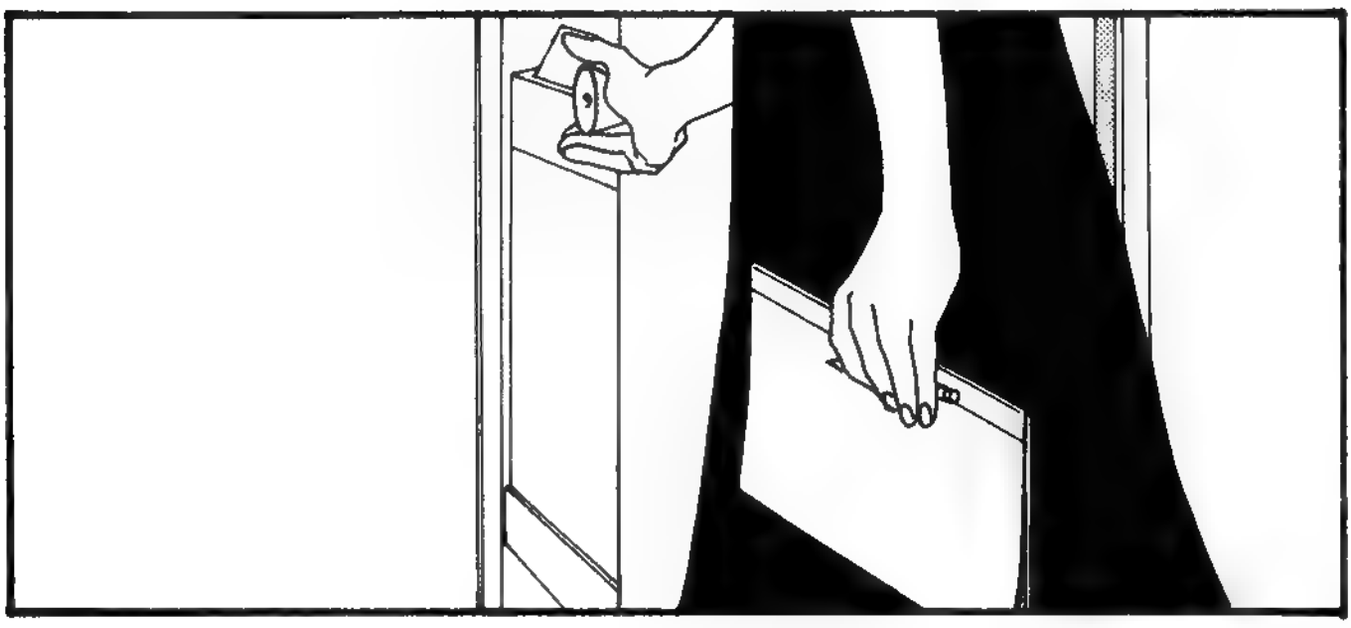
KIRISHIMA!
I SAW YOUR BINDER IN CLASS, SO I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

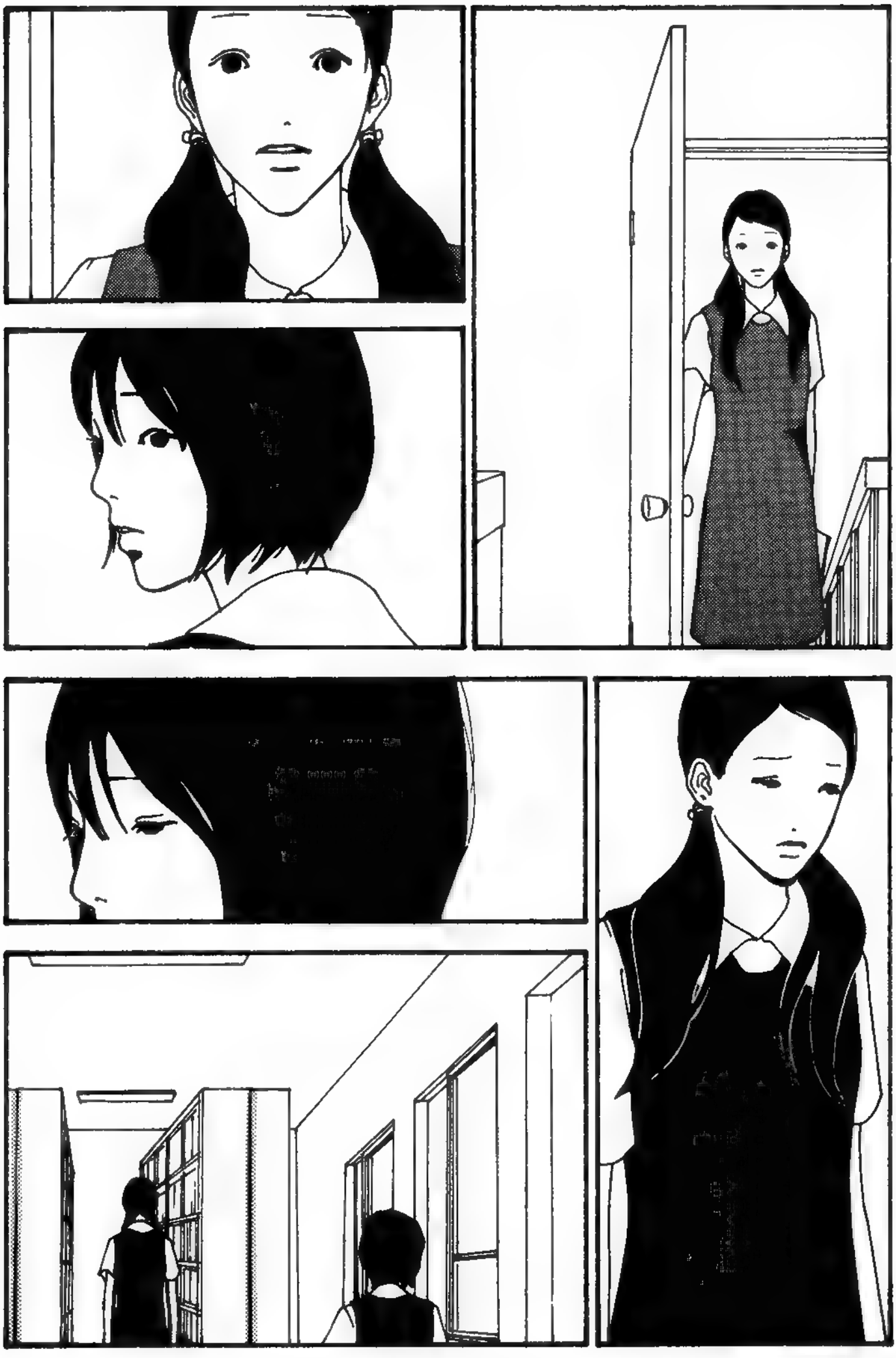
It's not Masami
that I hate...

LUCKY! THE LADY GAVE ME TOO MUCH CHANGE!
SO YOU CAN BUY ME JUICE THEN?
YEAH, RIGHT!
ASS!

SO WHERE'S KIRISHIMA?
IF KIRI-SHIMA TAKES TOO LONG, YOU CAN COME EAT WITH US IN CLASS 3C.
THANKS.
SHE'LL PROBABLY BE DONE SOON.
HUH? I JUST SAW MORISHITA EATING PEACE-FULLY IN THE TEACHER'S LOUNGE.
SHE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT HER ORI-ENTATION, SO SHE'S WITH MORI-SHITA.
OH YEAH?
I MUST HAVE MISUNDER-STOOD.



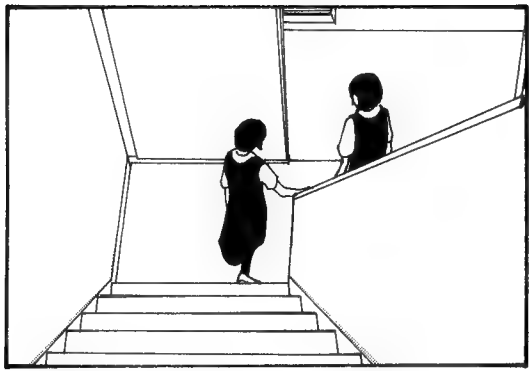




YOU'RE NOT EATING BREAKFAST?
HMM?
EXCUSE ME, KAYAKO!

I...
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO EXPLAIN MYSELF WITH YOU FOR A WHILE.
BUT YOU... YOU HAVE ENDO.
I WAS FURIOUS AFTER THE WHOLE THING WITH MIZUUCHI. IT'S TRUE.
BUT IT WAS JUST BECAUSE THAT WAS THE STRAW THAT BROKE THE CAMEL'S BACK...
EVEN IF I'M NOT THERE, YOU HAVE ENDO.
YOU KNOW, KAYAKO, I ENDED UP TELLING MYSELF THAT FOR YOU, ENDO WAS BETTER THAN ME.
DEEP DOWN, I WAS JEALOUS, THAT'S ALL.
IT WAS EXAS-PERATING TO SEE YOU AND ENDO GET SO CLOSE.

SORRY.
FORGIVE ME.
KAYAKO...
I'm like you. I feel the same thing as you.
I didn't think that you'd talk to me like this. I'm mad with myself... But I'm so happy. Thanks, Watanabe!



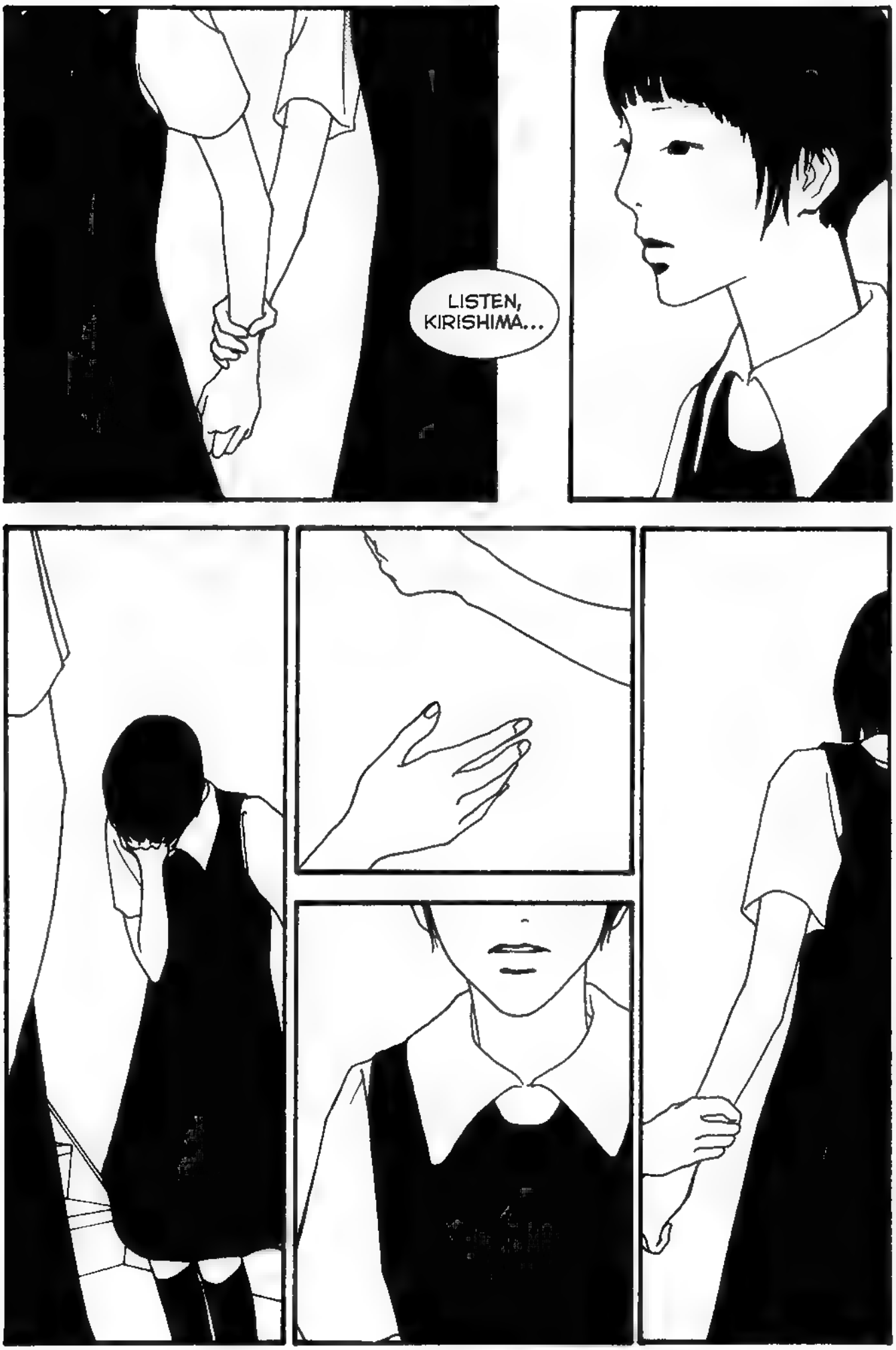
But I don't want to do the same thing as you.

There's nothing I can do. I just simply can't love Masami.

"It's Masami's fault, anyway. Because she didn't need me..."

What I can't support,

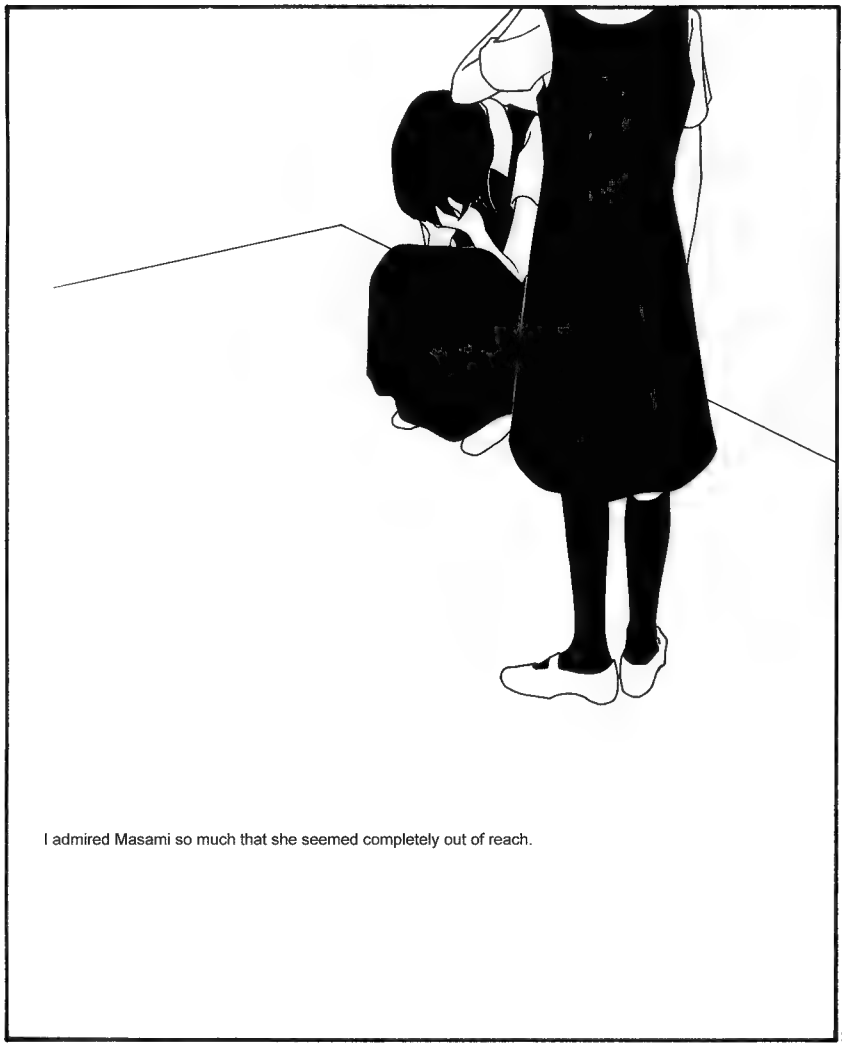
what's exasperating me is to feel so negatively. I'm hurting Masami while the only thing I want is for her to come back to me.


LISTEN, KIRISHIMA...

WH...
WHY ARE YOU AVOIDING ME?
I KNOW EVERYTHING.

YOU DIDN'T NEED ME.
YOU'RE...
WRONG...
YOU TOLD ME NOTHING!

WH...
I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO KNOW ABOUT IT.
I DIDN'T HAVE THE COURAGE TO TALK TO YOU.
WHY...?
WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
B... BECAUSE...

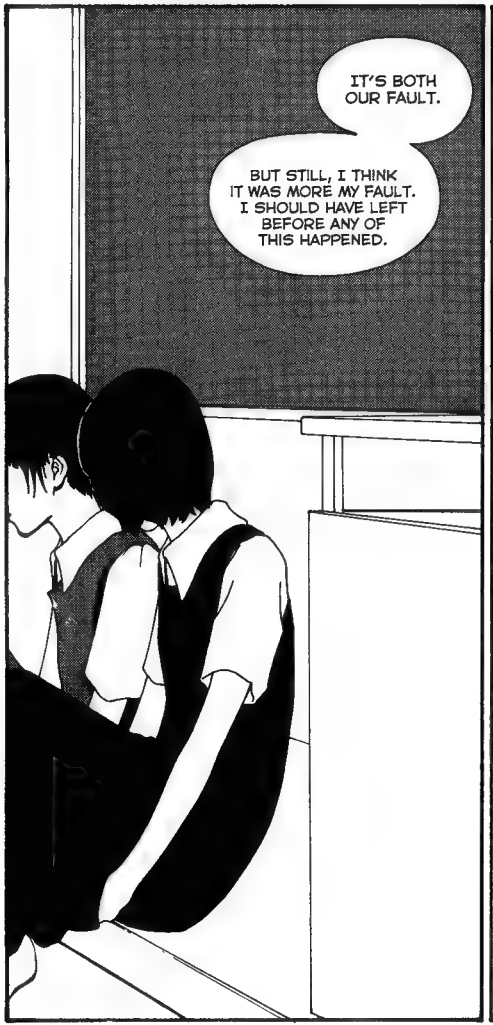


I admired Masami so much that she seemed completely out of reach.

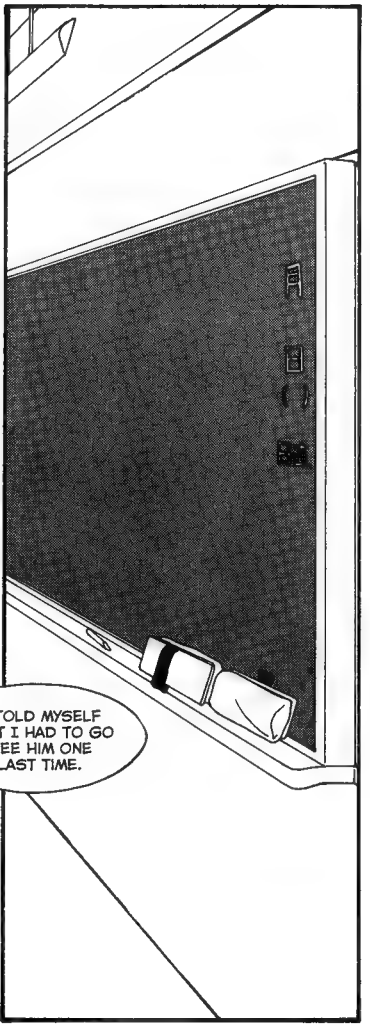
Even when she was laughing, even when she was kissing me. I admired her so much, she seemed unattainable.

I regret hurting her. My admiration for her transforms into compassion. And it hurts.

Chapter 8


IT'S BOTH OUR FAULT.
BUT STILL, I THINK IT WAS MORE MY FAULT. I SHOULD HAVE LEFT BEFORE ANY OF THIS HAPPENED.

BECAUSE OF ALL THAT, HIS YOUNG SON HAD IT ROUGH AS WELL.
WHAT I DID TO HIS WIFE WAS AWFUL.


I TOLD MYSELF THAT I HAD TO GO SEE HIM ONE LAST TIME.

THAT'S WHY I WANTED TO SEE HIM ONE LAST TIME.
TO ASK HIM TO TAKE CARE OF HIS WIFE.
TO NOT GET DIVORCED.
I SAY THAT, BUT DEEP DOWN...
IT'S AN ACT...

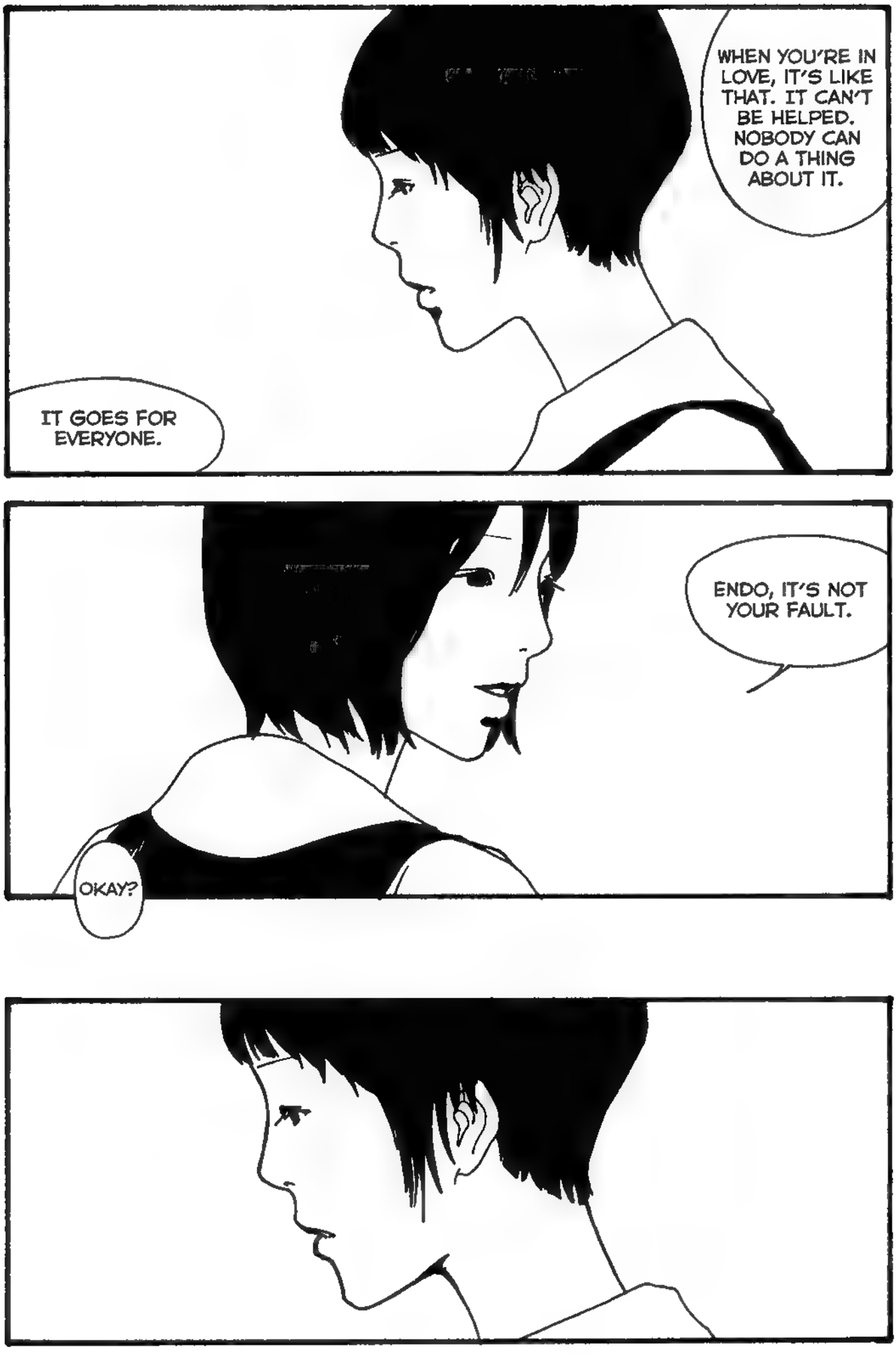
IN REALITY...

I WASN'T EVEN LISTENING TO WHAT HE WAS SAYING. I WAS JUST SO HAPPY THAT HE CALLED.
WHEN HE CALLED ME SO THAT WE COULD SEE EACH OTHER, I WAS VERY HAPPY.

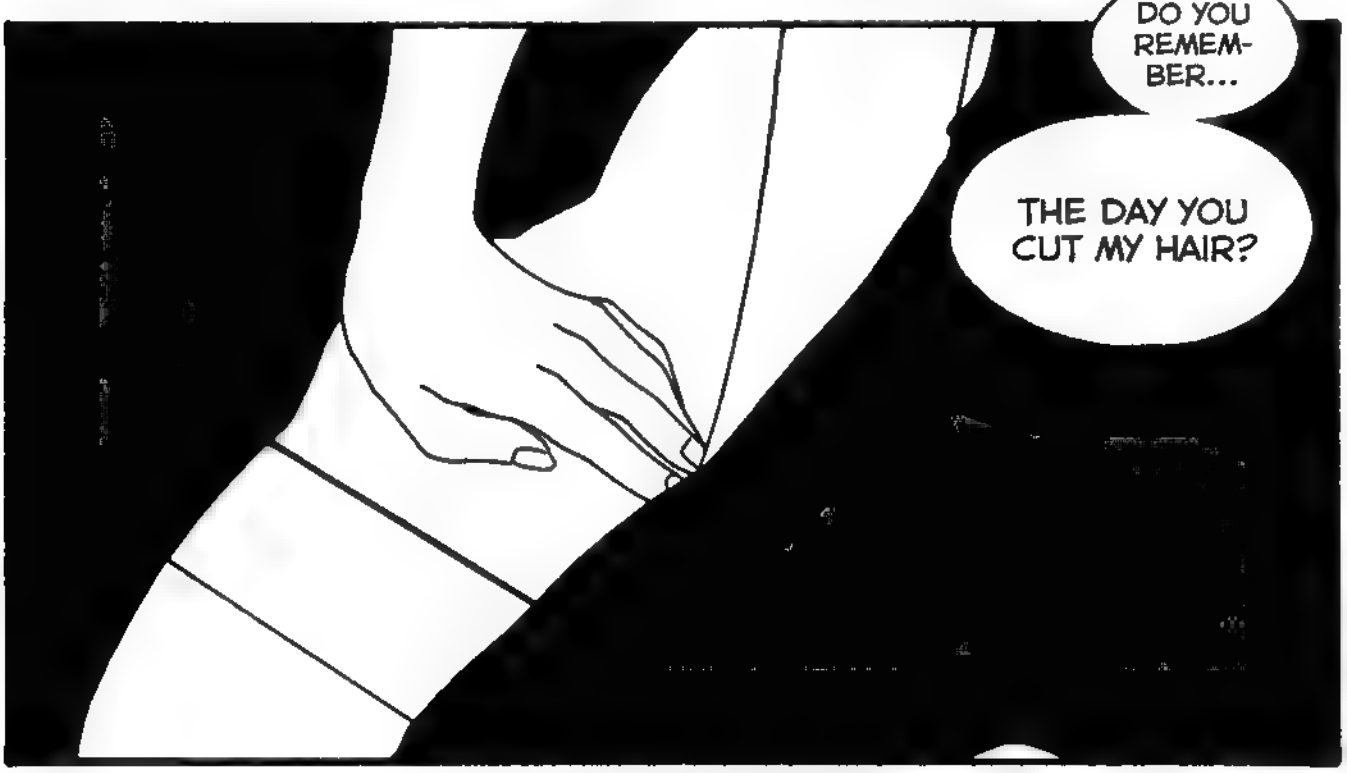
WHEN HE SAID HE WANTED TO SEE ME, I COULD ONLY THINK ABOUT THAT.
AND I FOUND THE SAME EMOTIONS FROM WHEN WE WERE TOGETHER.
I RECOGNIZED HIS VOICE RIGHT AWAY.

DEEP INSIDE OF ME...
I WAS TRYING REAL HARD TO CONVINCE MYSELF THAT I WAS OBLIGATED TO MEET HIM AND THAT I WASN'T CONCEDING MY DESIRE TO BE WITH HIM.
I FELT LIKE I REALLY, REALLY WANTED TO SEE HIM, BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO CONTINUE THAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP.

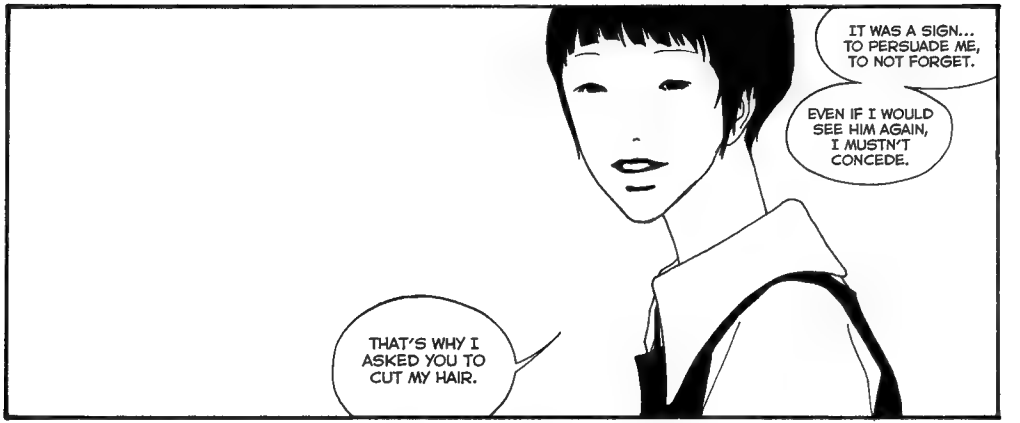
I'M NUTS, HUH?
I DON'T THINK YOU WERE OUT OF LINE AT ALL.
YOU'RE NOT NUTS, YOU'RE JUST IN LOVE. THAT'S ALL.
NOT AT ALL!


WHEN YOU'RE IN LOVE, IT'S LIKE THAT. IT CAN'T BE HELPED. NOBODY CAN DO A THING ABOUT IT.
IT GOES FOR EVERYONE.
ENDO, IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
OKAY?

...OKAY.


DO YOU REMEMBER...
THE DAY YOU CUT MY HAIR?

What Masami was telling me.
The pain I caused her.
What Watanabe said...



Undoubtably, we were too naive...

...Simply naive

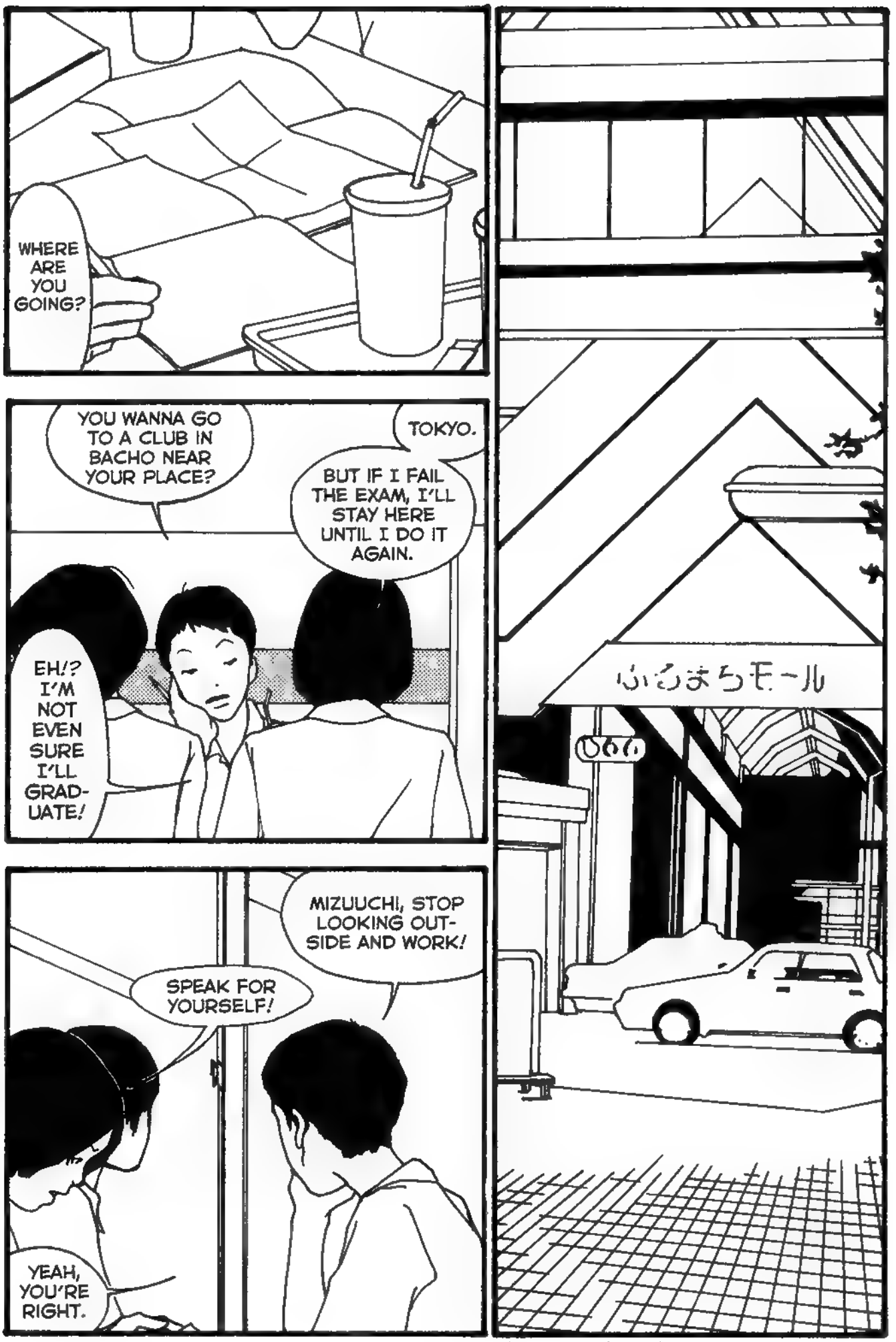
Even if we were doing awful things.

But were those really
reprehensible things?

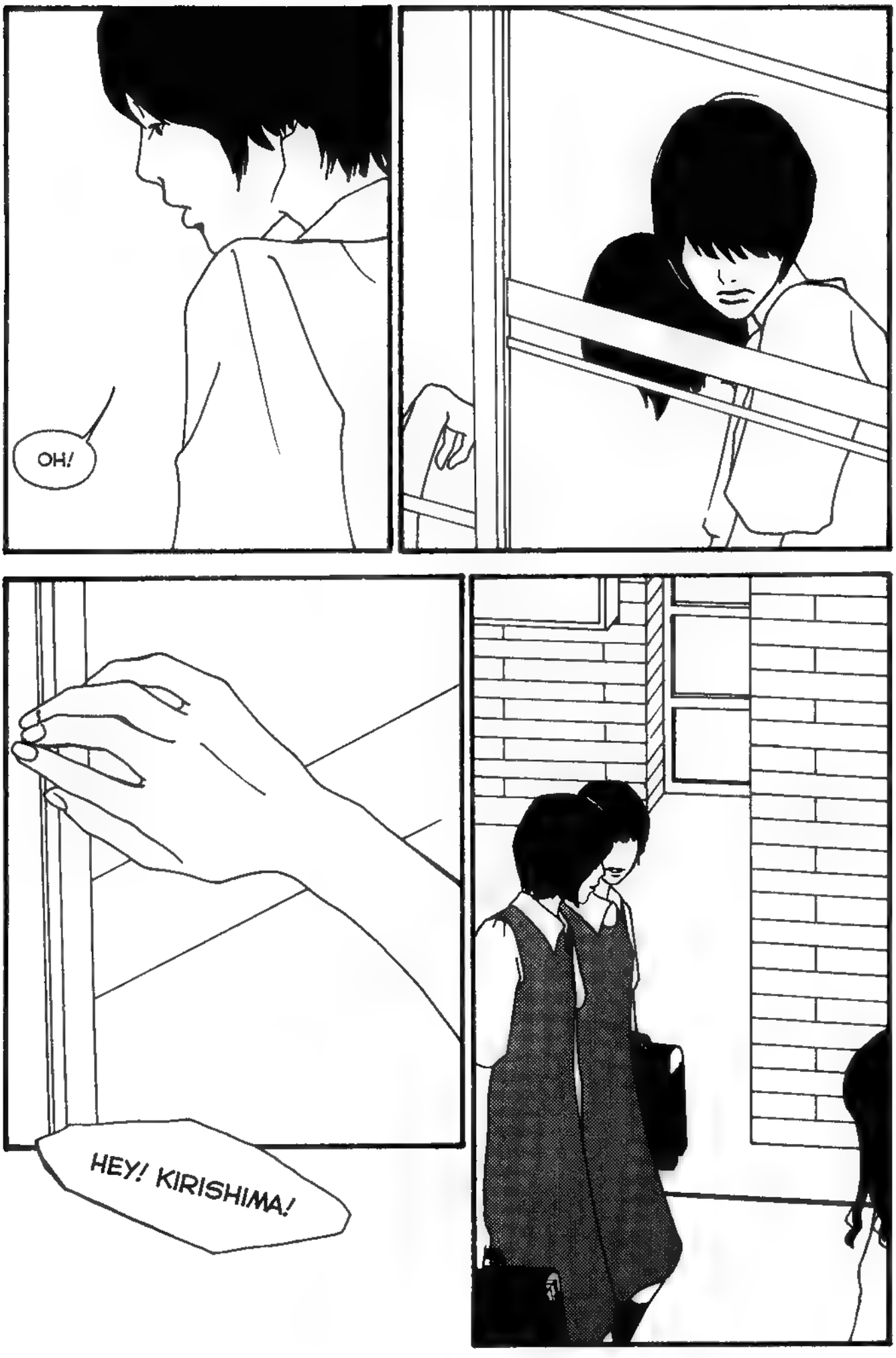
ARE YOU COMING IN THE YARD WITH US?
WE'RE GOING TO EAT OUTSIDE.
YOU TWO HAVE AL-READY MADE UP?
WELL! WATANABE...
WATANABE! YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU WANT!
COME ON, LET'S GO!

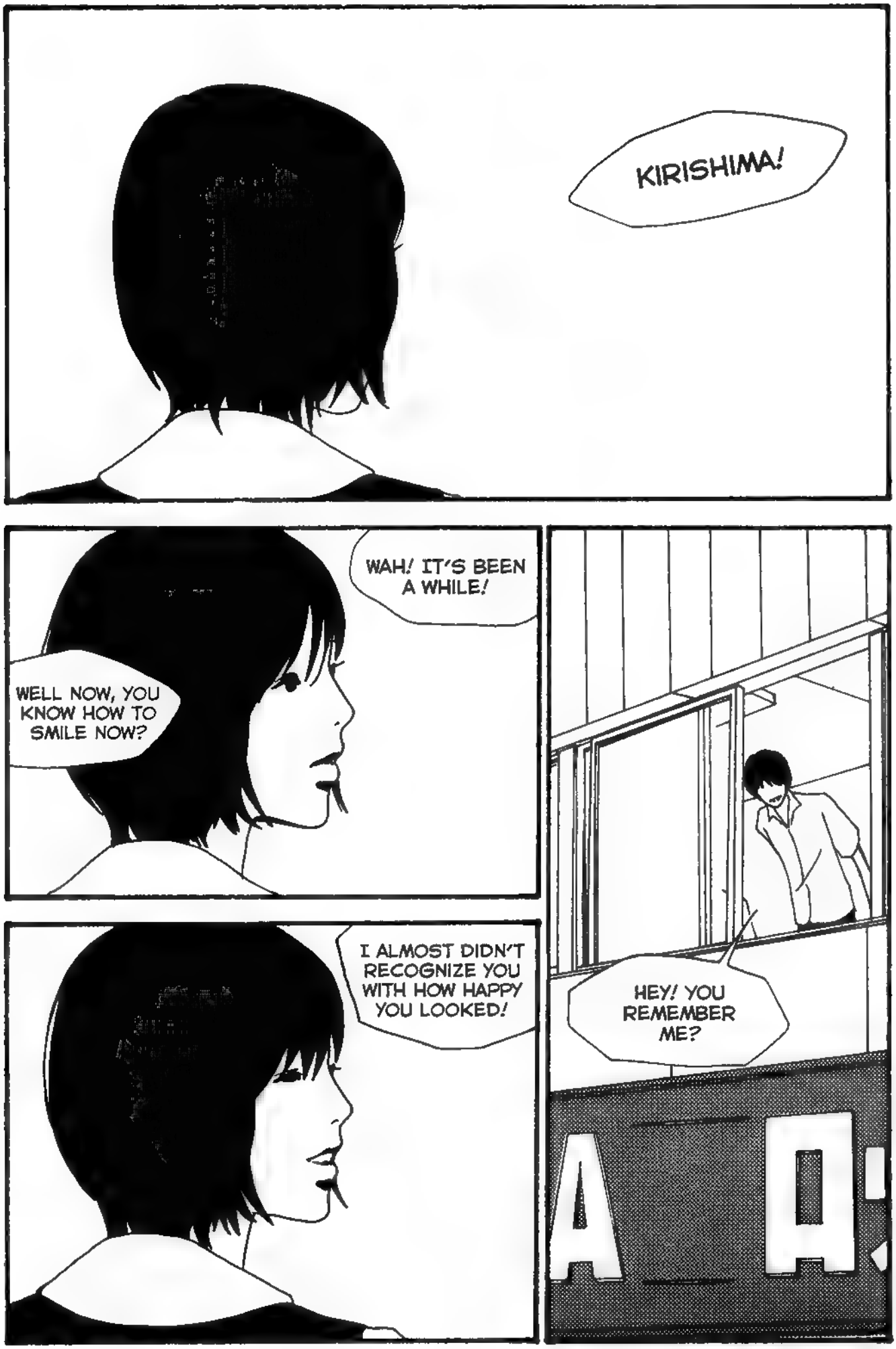
YOU SEE, KIRISHIMA? THINGS GET SETTLED.

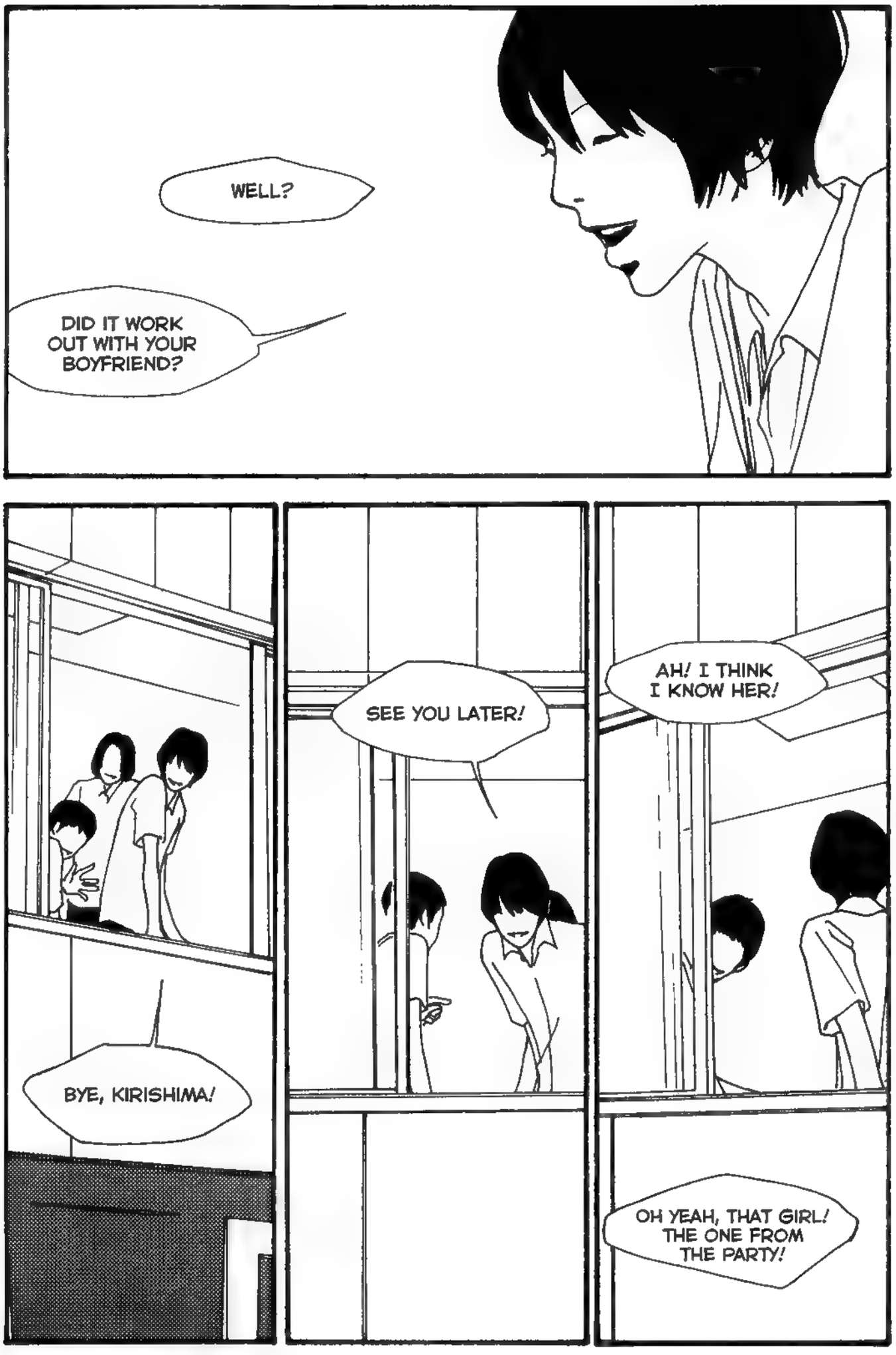
BECAUSE OF YOU, WE'RE TOO SCARED TO TALK TO HER.
I KNOW, I'M SORRY!
YOU THINK THAT'LL BE ENOUGH!? YOU'RE WITH ME, RIGHT, KAYAKO?
I ALREADY TOLD YOU I'M SORRY! COME ON, FORGET IT.
HA HA HA HA!

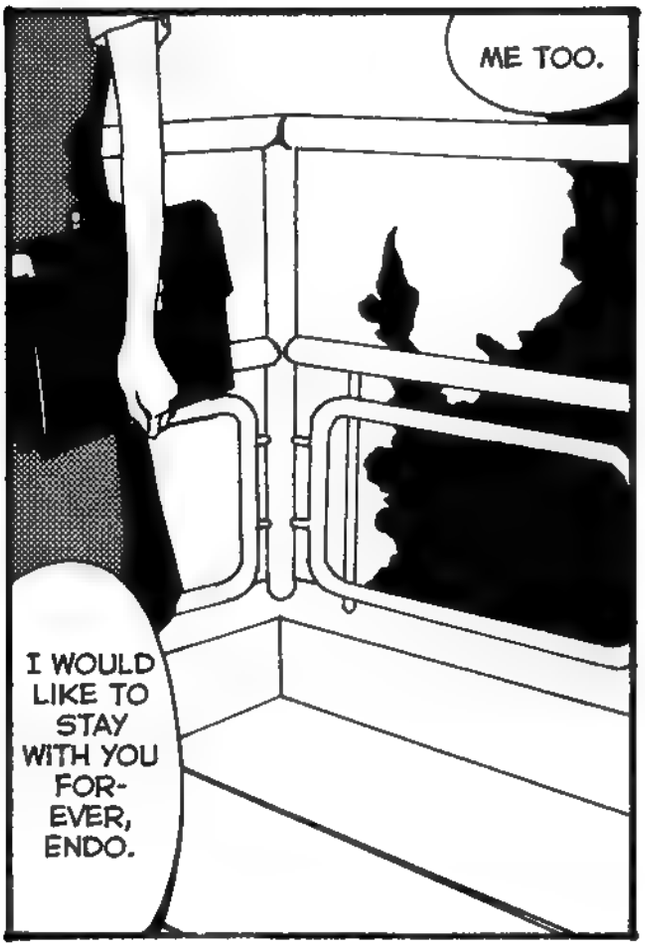

WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TOKYO.
YOU WANNA GO TO A CLUB IN BACHO NEAR YOUR PLACE?
BUT IF I FAIL THE EXAM, I'LL STAY HERE UNTIL I DO IT AGAIN.
EH!? I'M NOT EVEN SURE I'LL GRAD-UATE!
MIZUUCHI, STOP LOOKING OUT-SIDE AND WORK!
SPEAK FOR YOURSELF!
YEAH, YOU'RE RIGHT.
ふるまちモール

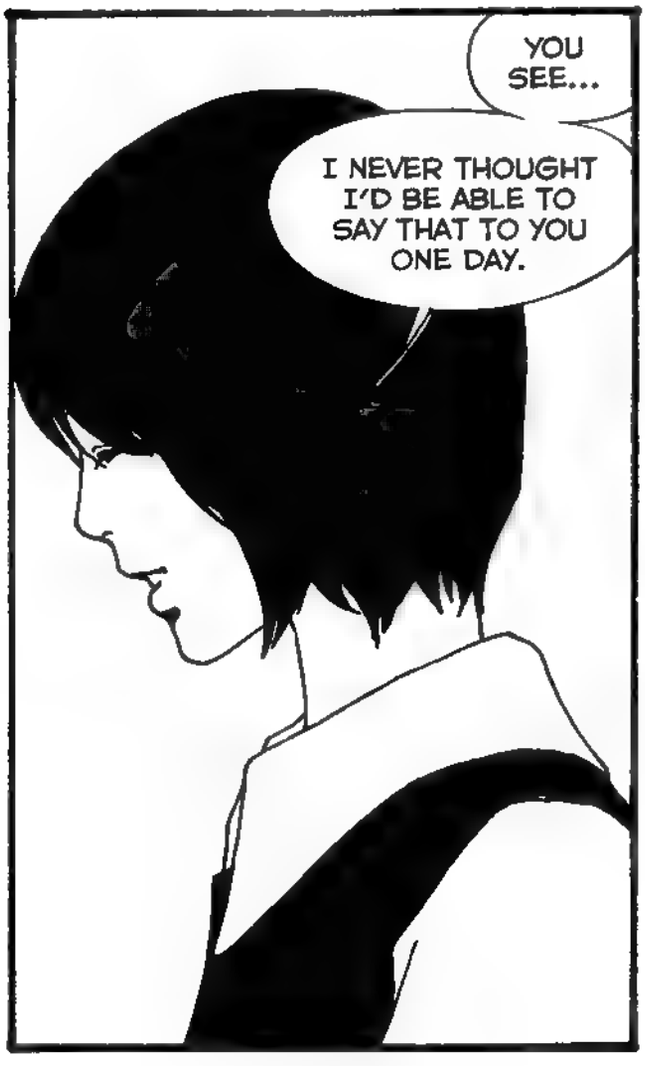
Sign: Furumachi Shopping Center

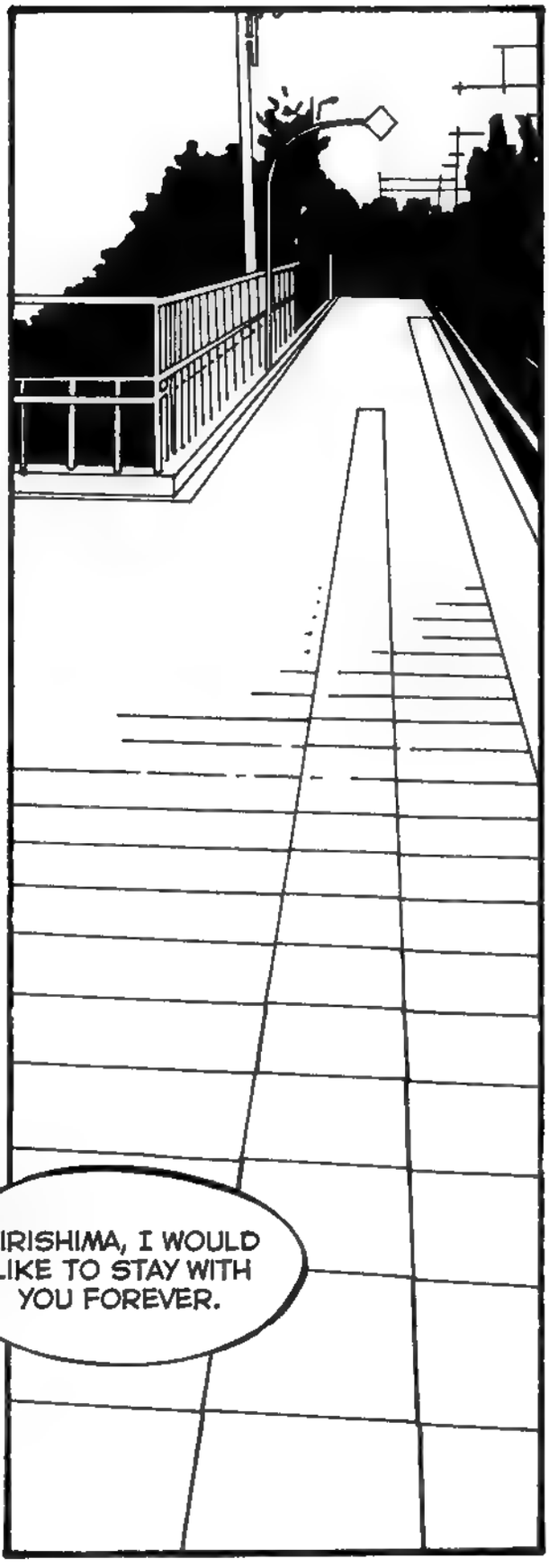

OH!
HEY! KIRISHIMA!


KIRISHIMA!
WAH! IT'S BEEN A WHILE!
WELL NOW, YOU KNOW HOW TO SMILE NOW?
I ALMOST DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU WITH HOW HAPPY YOU LOOKED!
HEY! YOU REMEMBER ME?
A A


WELL?
DID IT WORK OUT WITH YOUR BOYFRIEND?
BYE, KIRISHIMA!
SEE YOU LATER!
AH! I THINK I KNOW HER!
OH YEAH, THAT GIRL! THE ONE FROM THE PARTY!


ME TOO.
I WOULD LIKE TO STAY WITH YOU FOR-EVER, ENDO.


YOU SEE...
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D BE ABLE TO SAY THAT TO YOU ONE DAY.


KIRISHIMA, I WOULD LIKE TO STAY WITH YOU FOREVER.

BUT...
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT. IT'S LIKE I'M DREAMING.
IF IT COULD STAY FOREVER THE SAME...
EVEN THEN, YOU THINK THAT ONE DAY IT HAS TO END?

STAY FOREVER LIKE THIS,
EXACTLY LIKE IT IS AT THIS VERY MOMENT, THAT WOULD BE SO NICE!

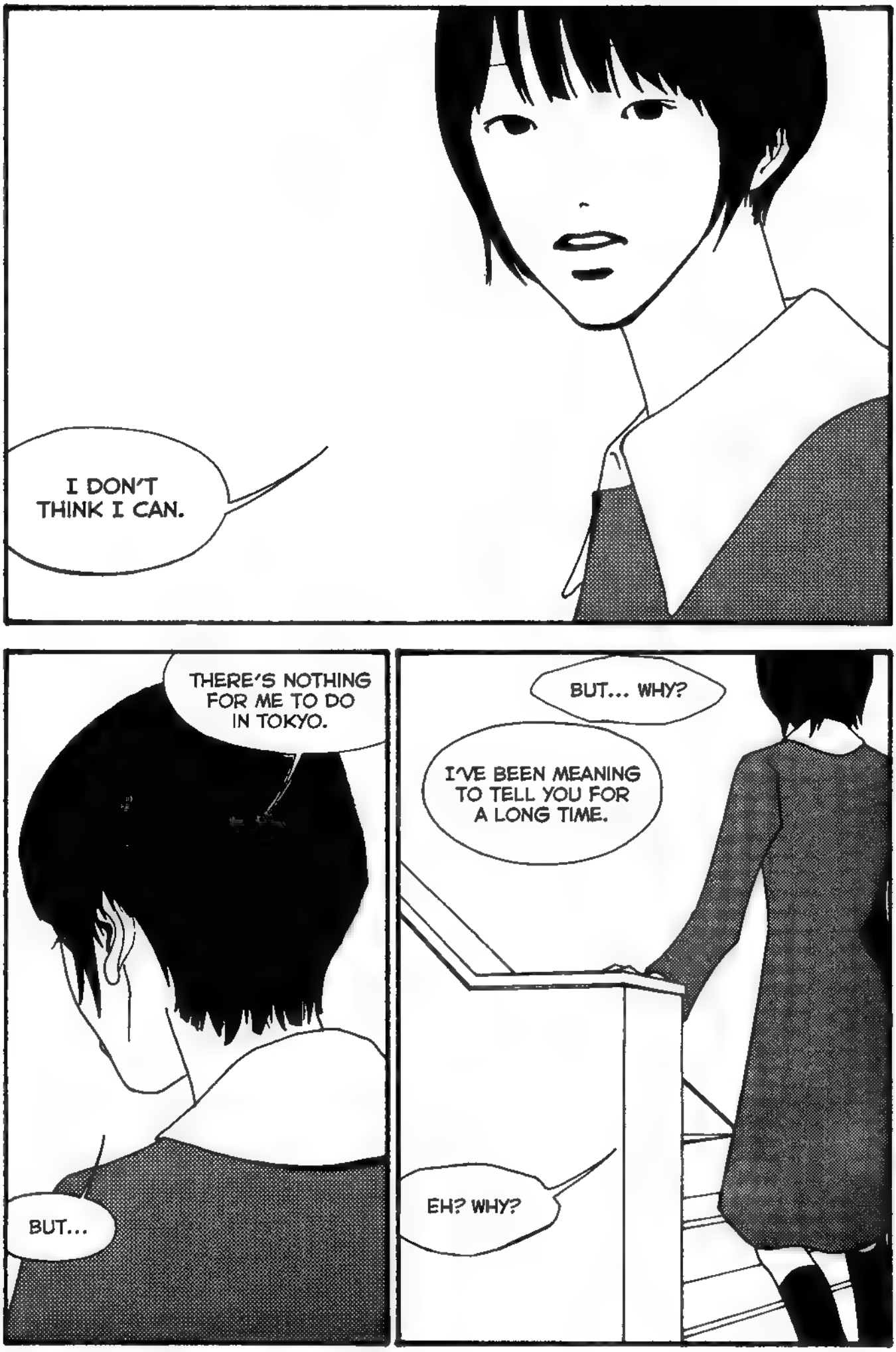
Chapter 9

THE IN-SCRIPTION PAPERS FROM THE TOKYO SCHOOL ARE HERE.
CONGRATULA-TIONS!
KIRISHIMA, YOU'VE BEEN ACCEPTED.

GOODBYE, MA'AM.
WELL?

I'VE BEEN ACCEPTED.
CONGRATS, KIRISHIMA!
I'M SURE IT'S GOING TO WORK OUT FOR YOU IN TOKYO.
MMM...

ENDO, YOU'RE COMING WITH ME, RIGHT?
SAY, YOU'RE COMING TO TOKYO TOO, RIGHT?
KIRISHIMA... I'M SORRY!


I DON'T THINK I CAN.
THERE'S NOTHING FOR ME TO DO IN TOKYO.
BUT...
BUT... WHY?
I'VE BEEN MEANING TO TELL YOU FOR A LONG TIME.
EH? WHY?

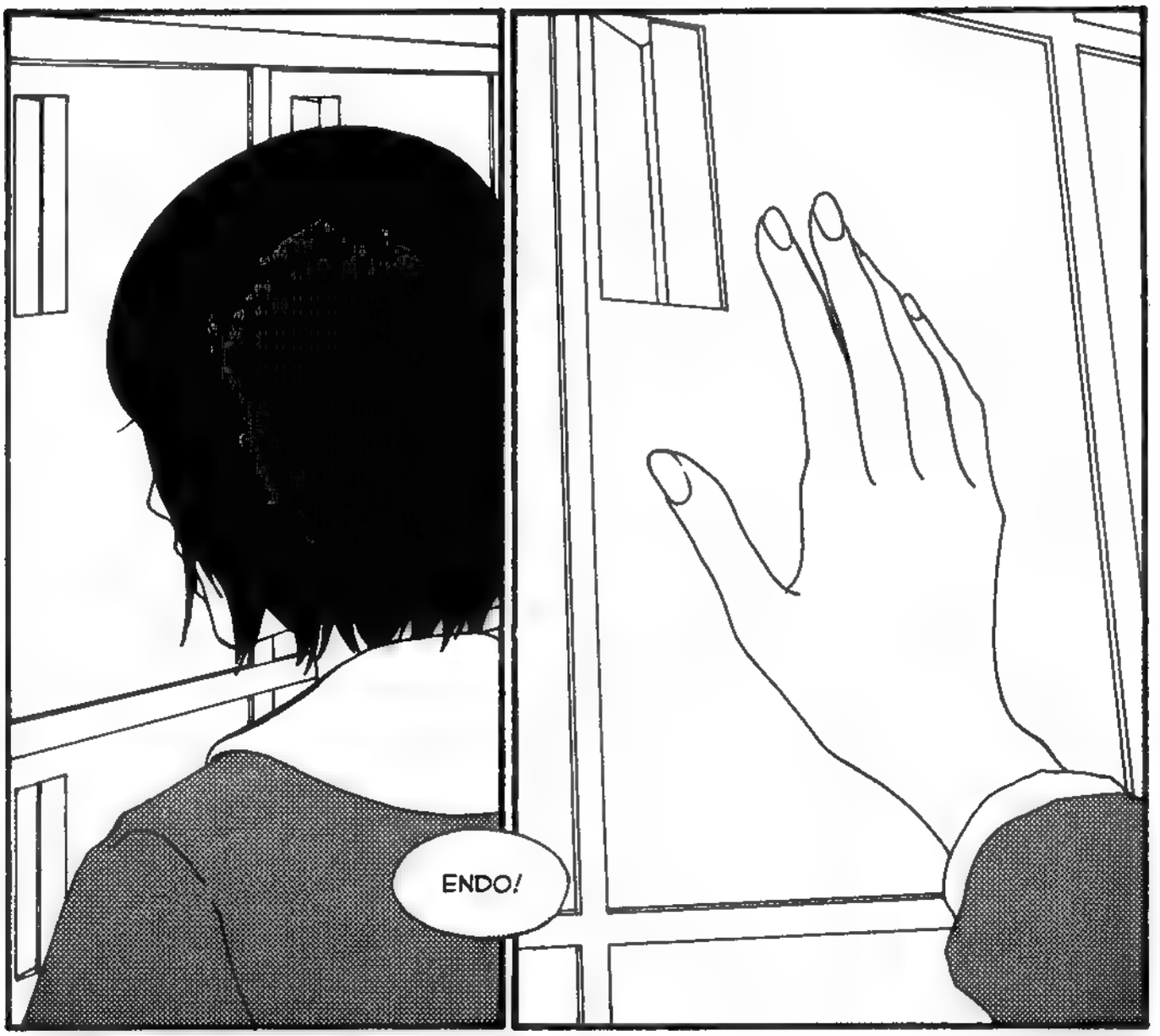
An answer for the future...

Masami, who told me she didn't know what she wanted to do, found an answer for the future.

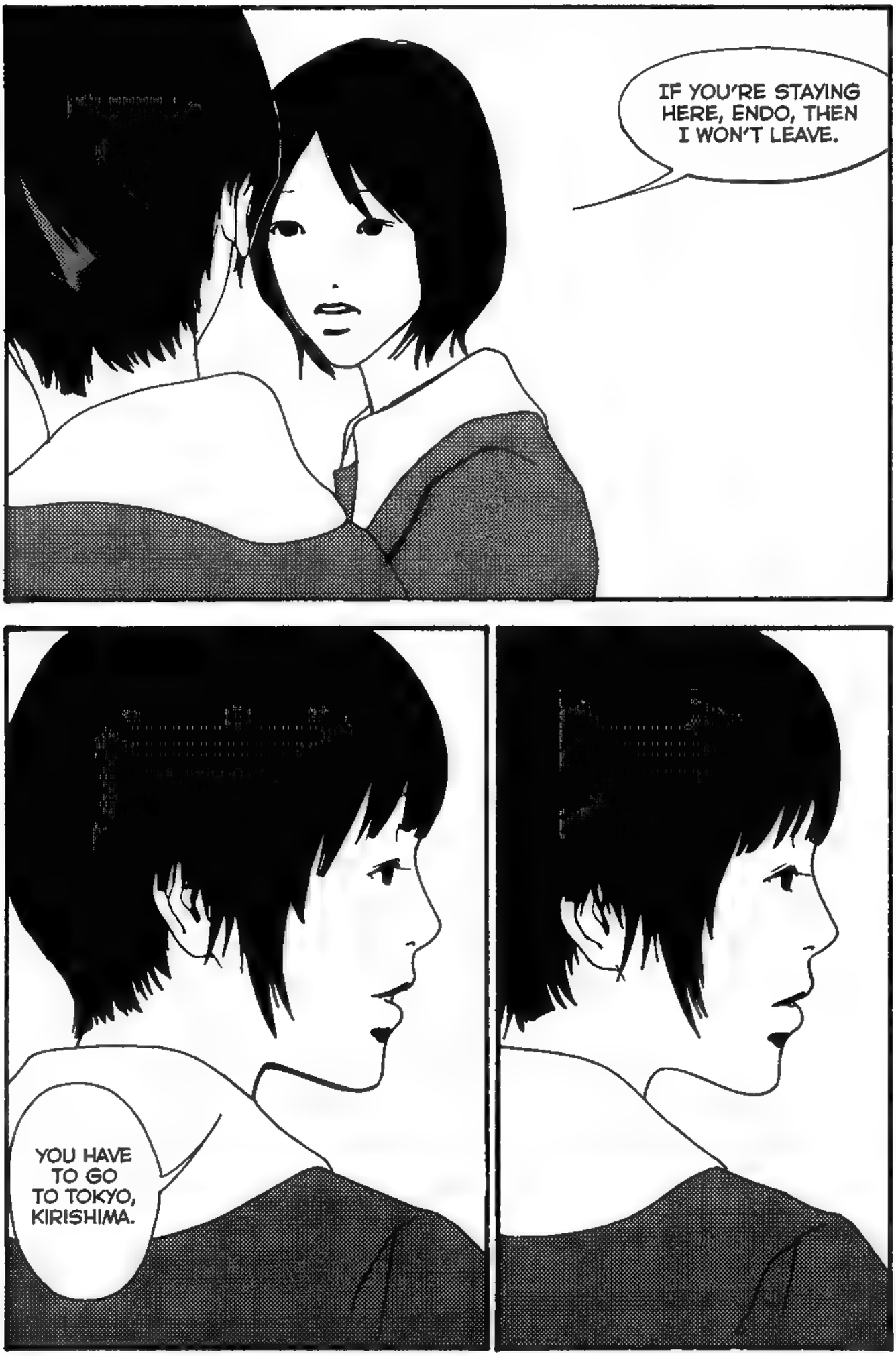
I'm an idiot. What I want
is to be with Masami.

More than learning to draw,
more than going to Tokyo.

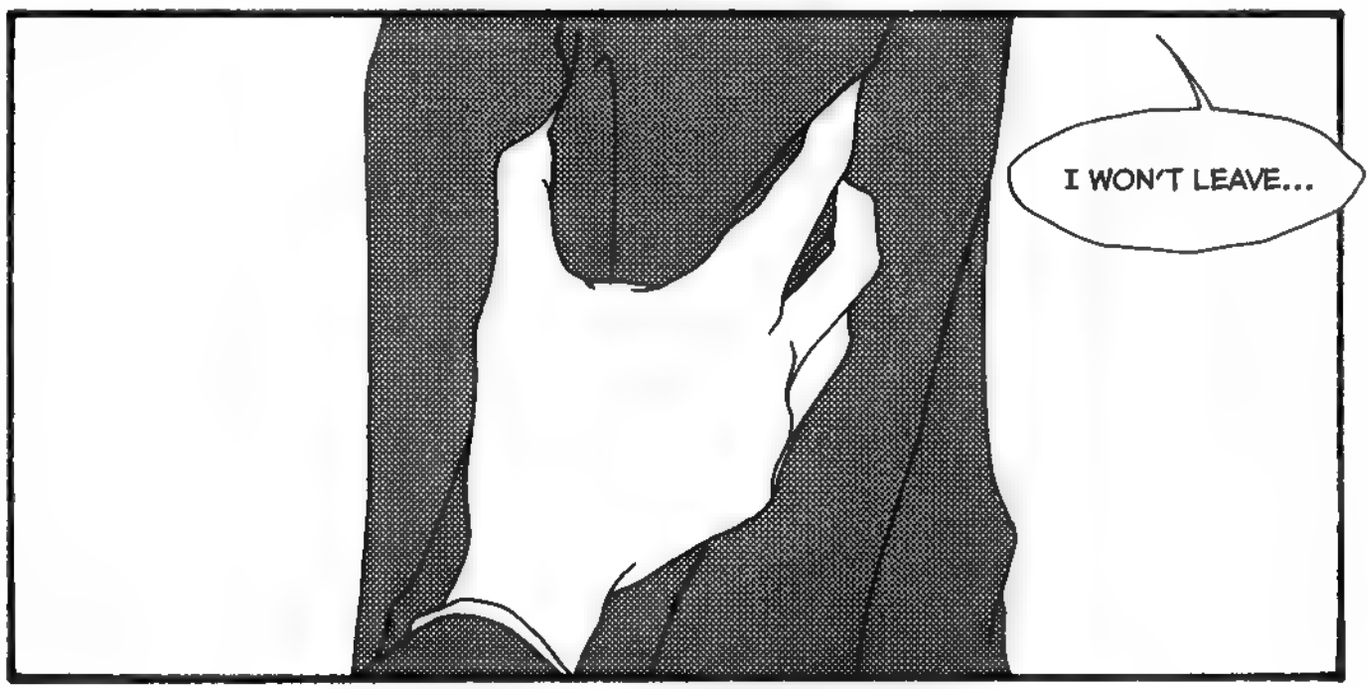
It's Masami that's important...


ENDO!

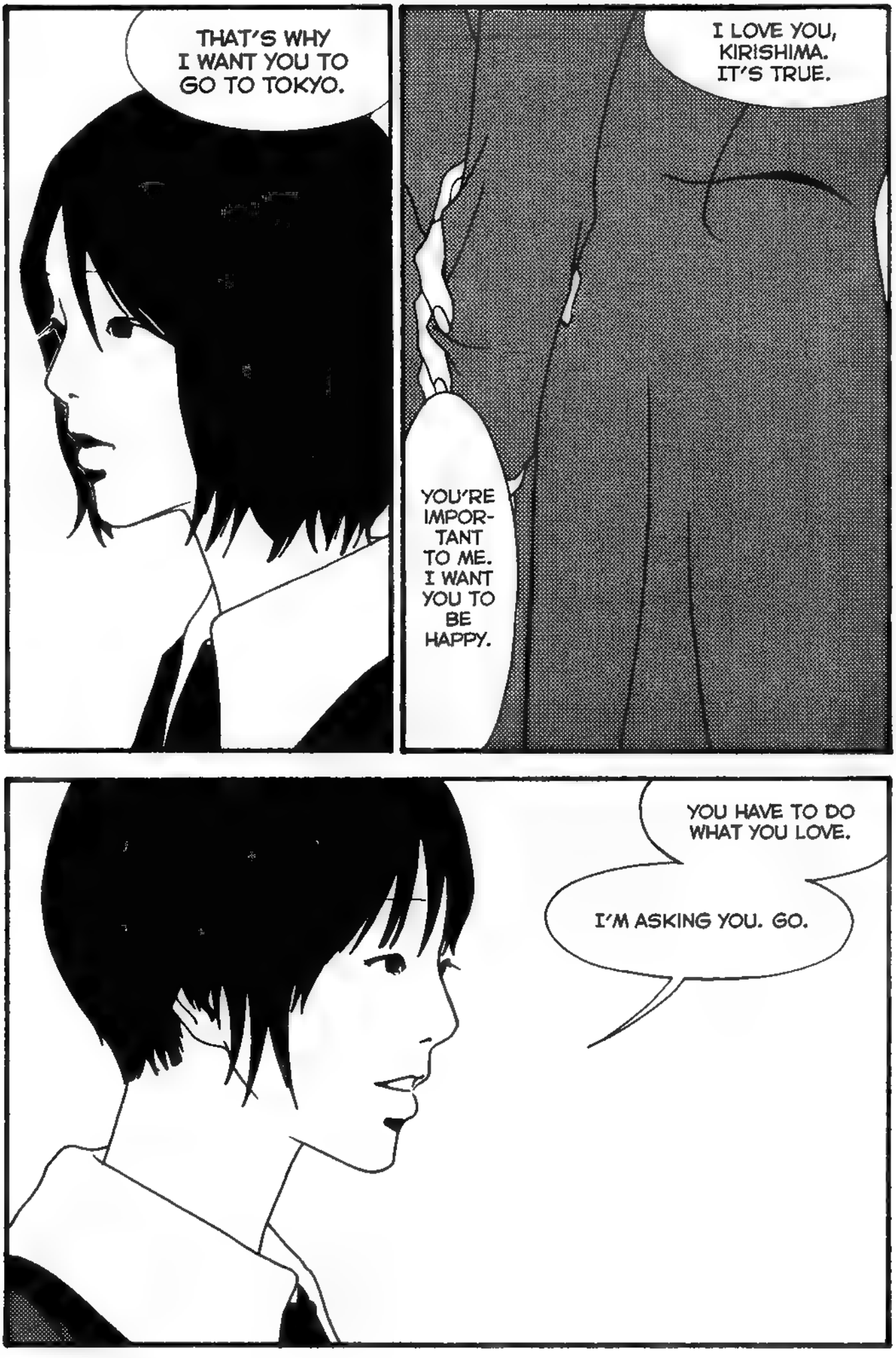
I'VE DECIDED TO STAY.

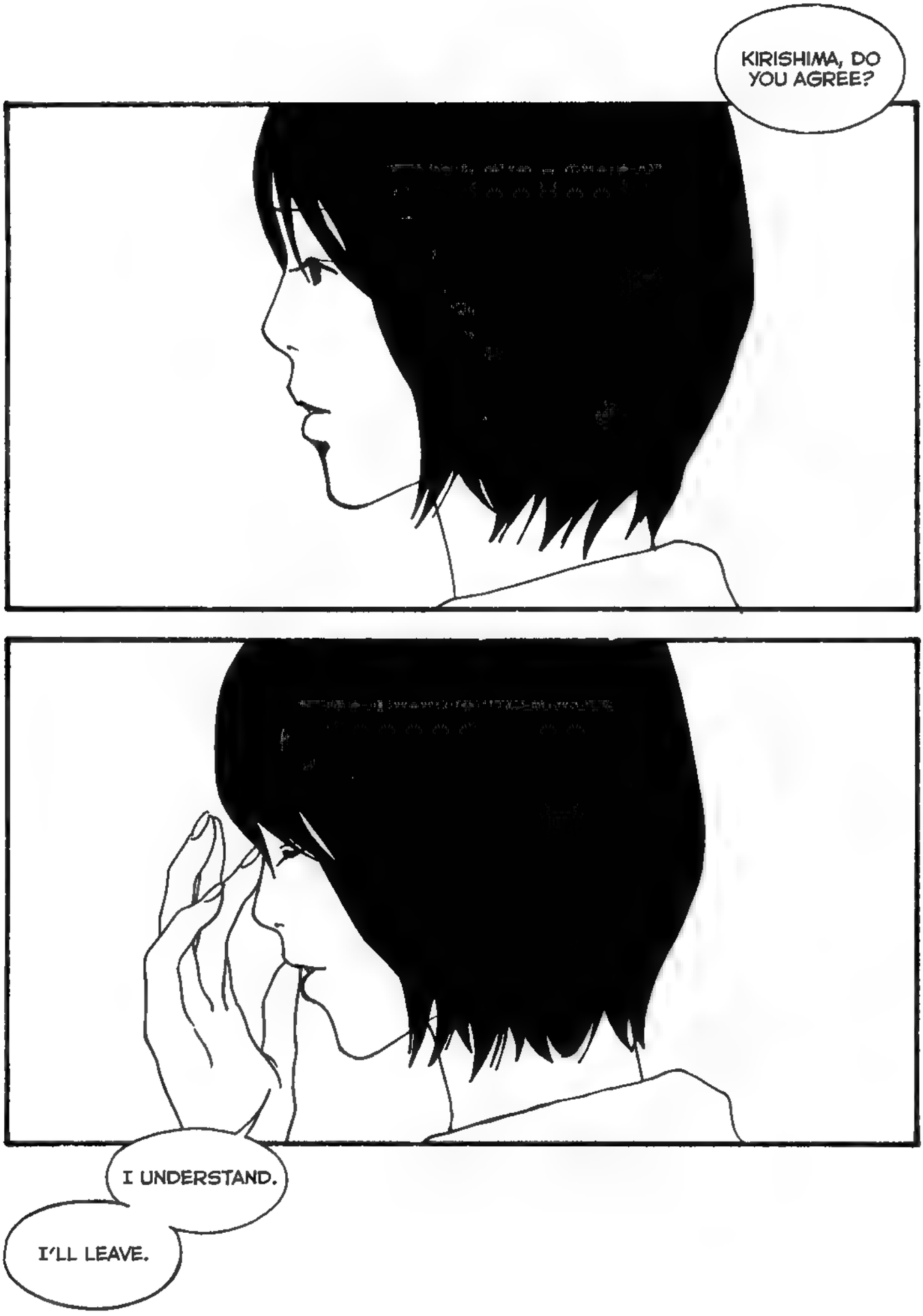

IF YOU'RE STAYING HERE, ENDO, THEN I WON'T LEAVE.
YOU HAVE TO GO TO TOKYO, KIRISHIMA.

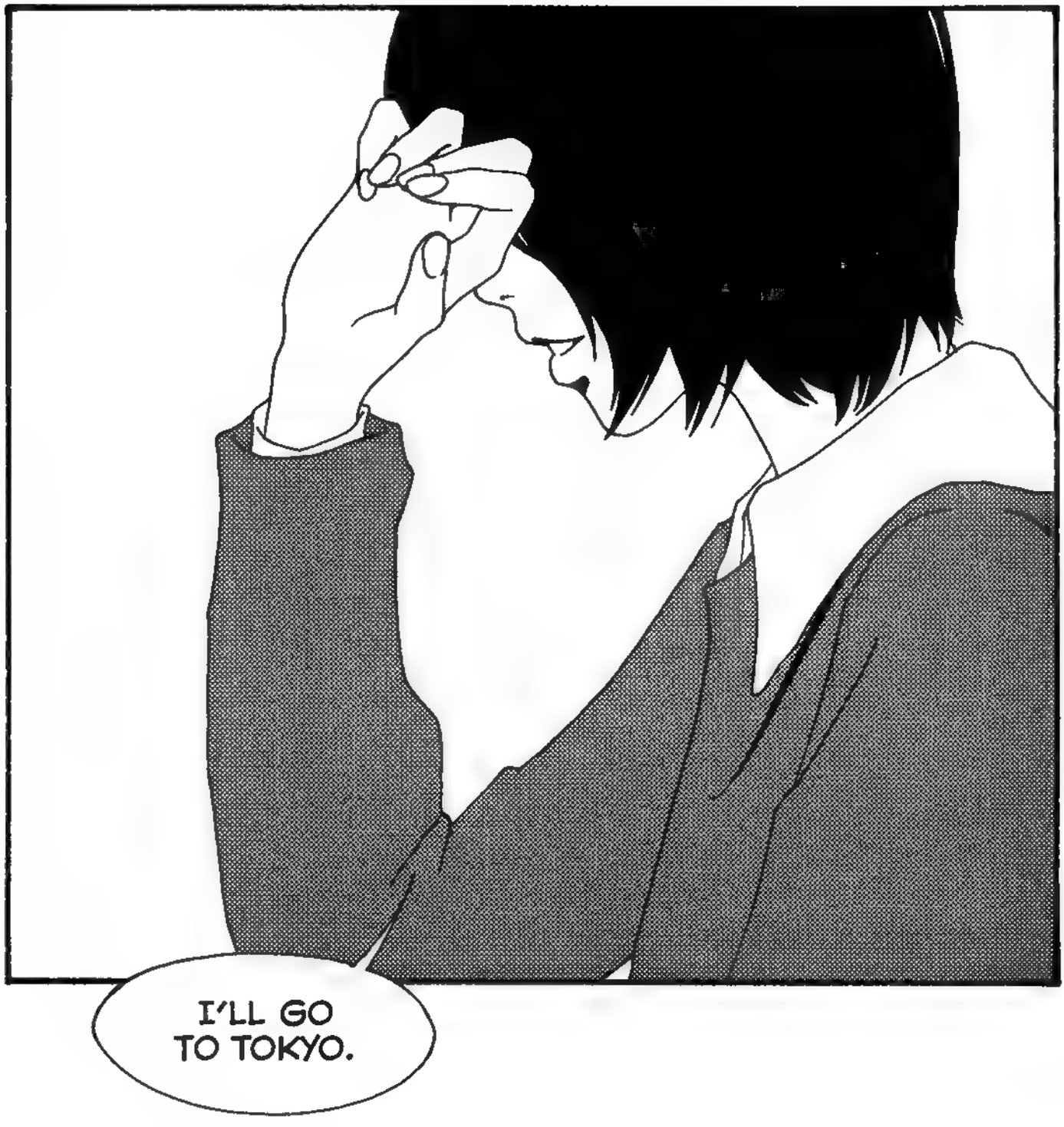
WE'RE NOT BREAKING UP, BUT WE HAVE TO FOLLOW OUR PATH.
I DON'T WANT TO.
IT'S TOO SAD!
I DON'T WANT US TO BREAK UP!


I WON'T LEAVE...

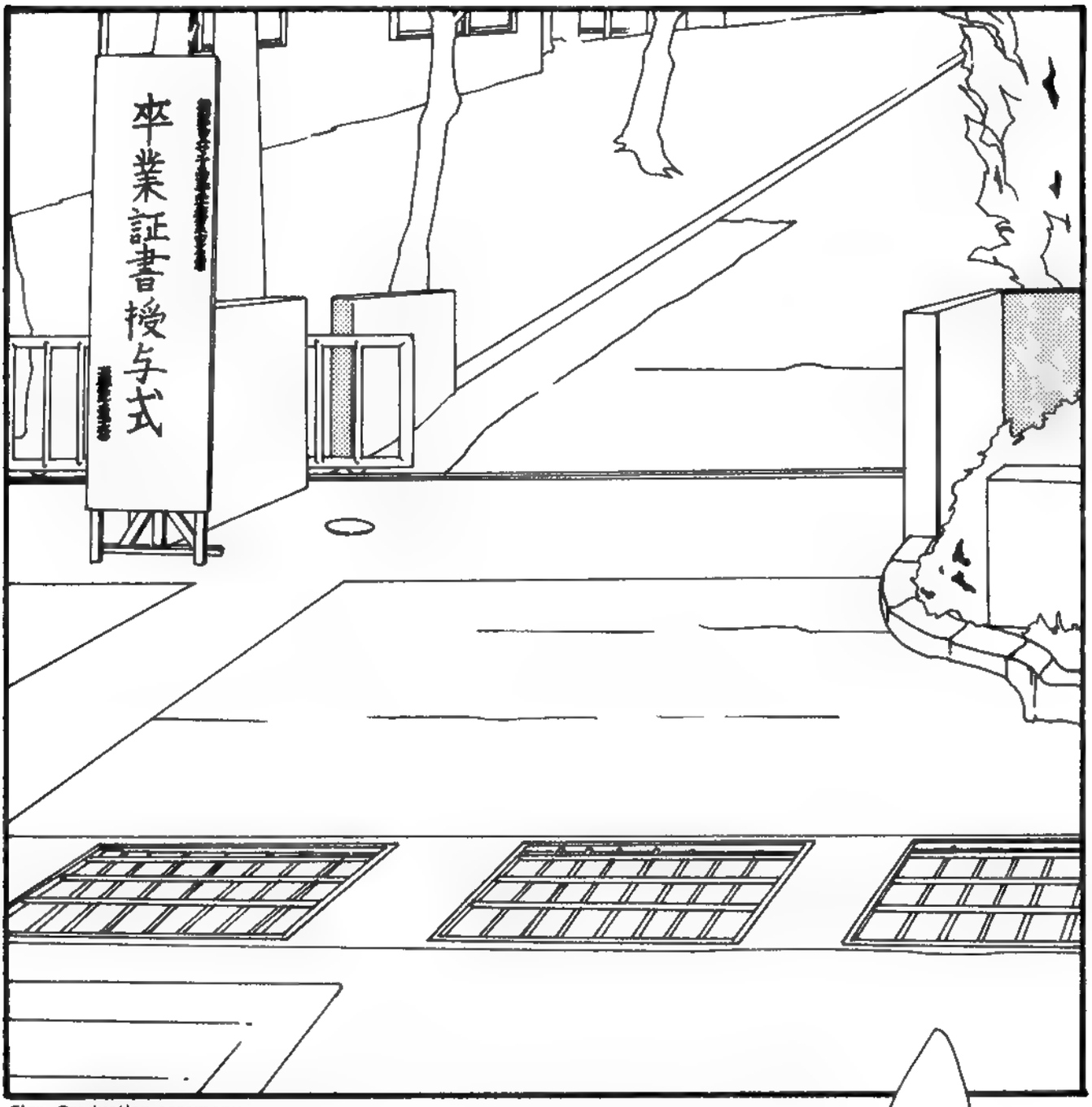
KIRISHIMA, LISTEN TO ME! EVEN IF YOU STAY, I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING FOR YOU.


THAT'S WHY I WANT YOU TO GO TO TOKYO.
I LOVE YOU, KIRISHIMA. IT'S TRUE.
YOU'RE IMPOR-TANT TO ME. I WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY.
YOU HAVE TO DO WHAT YOU LOVE.
I'M ASKING YOU. GO.

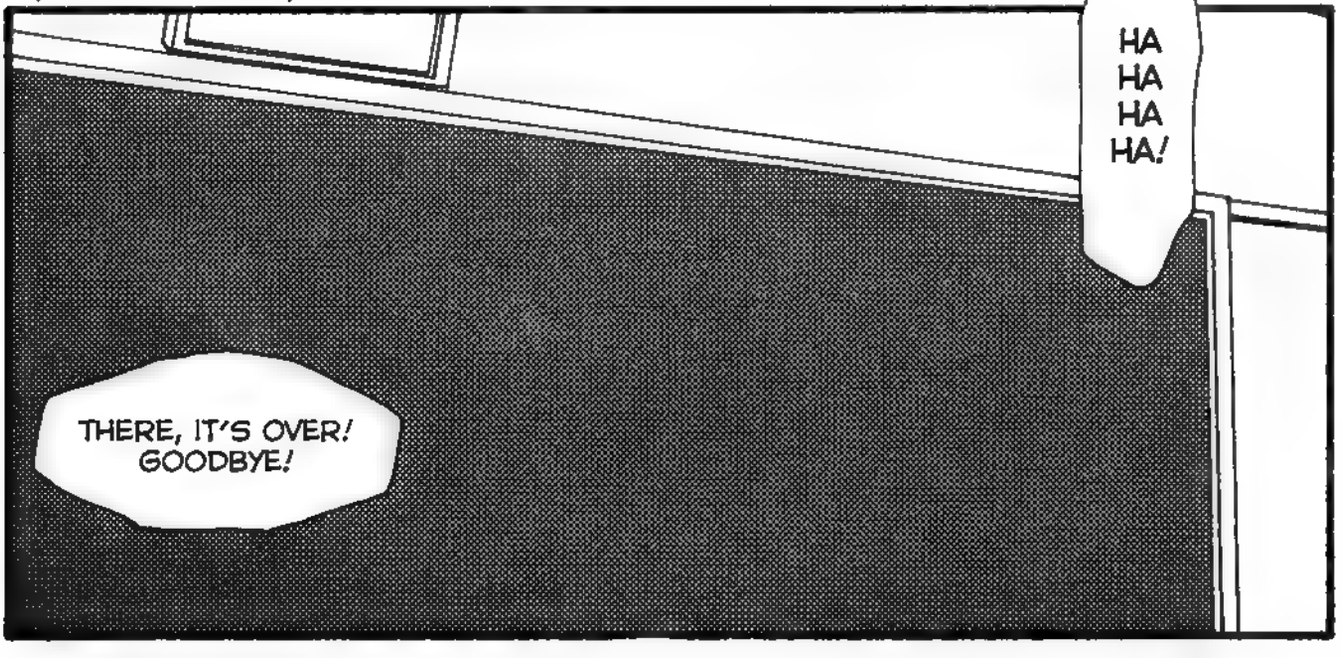

KIRISHIMA, DO YOU AGREE?
I UNDERSTAND.
I'LL LEAVE.

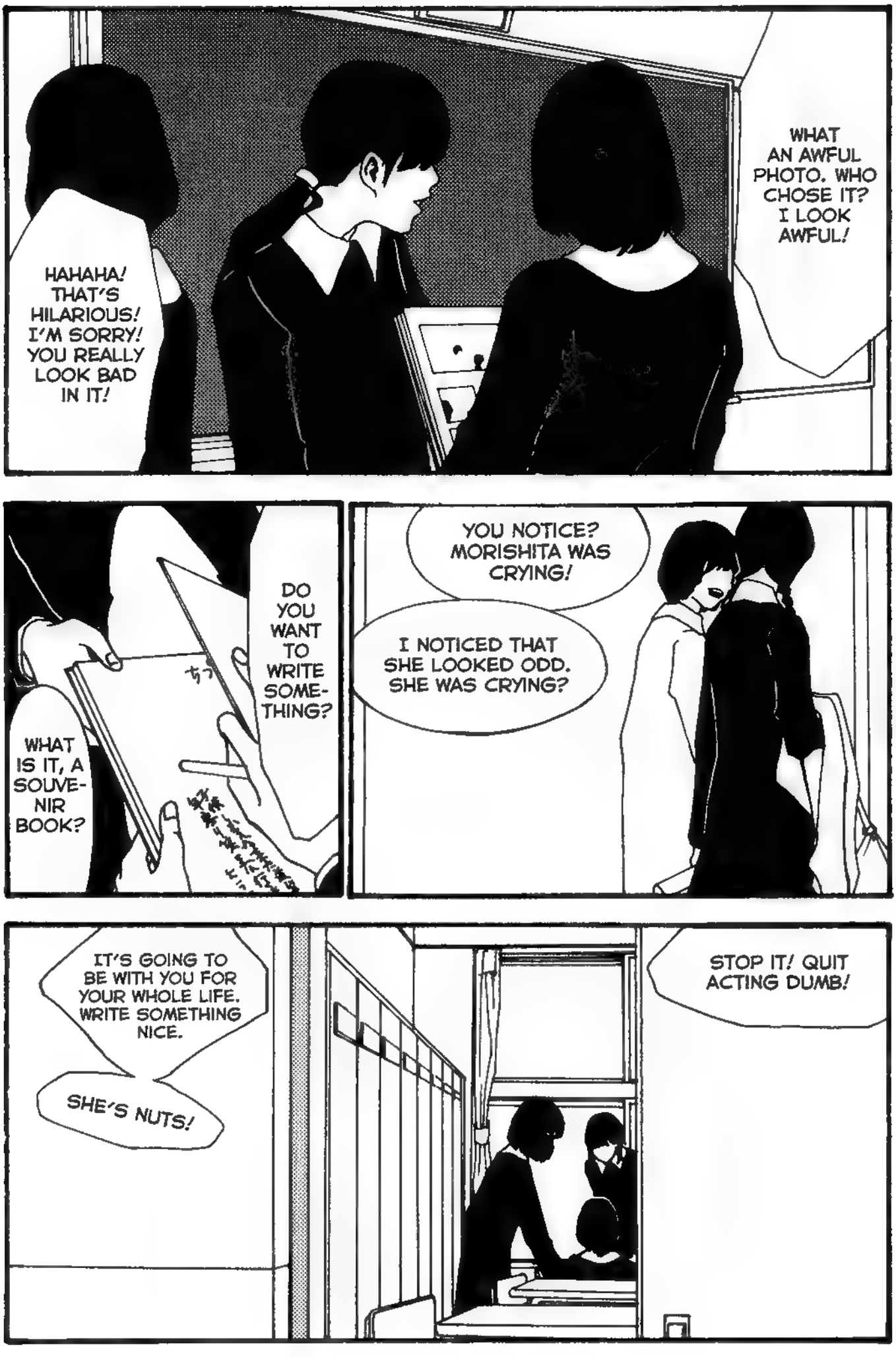

I'LL GO TO TOKYO.

Chapter 10

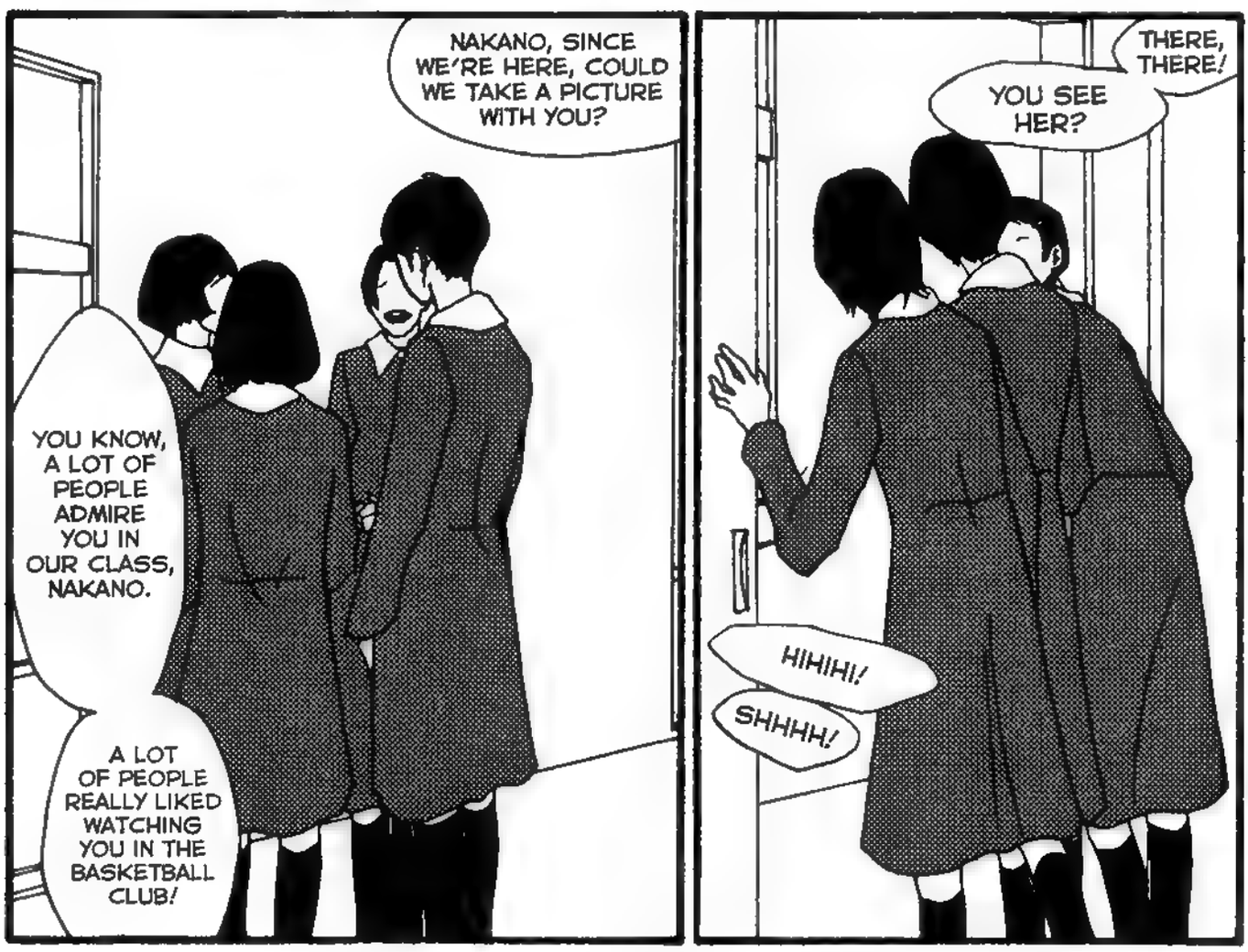


Sign: Graduation ceremony

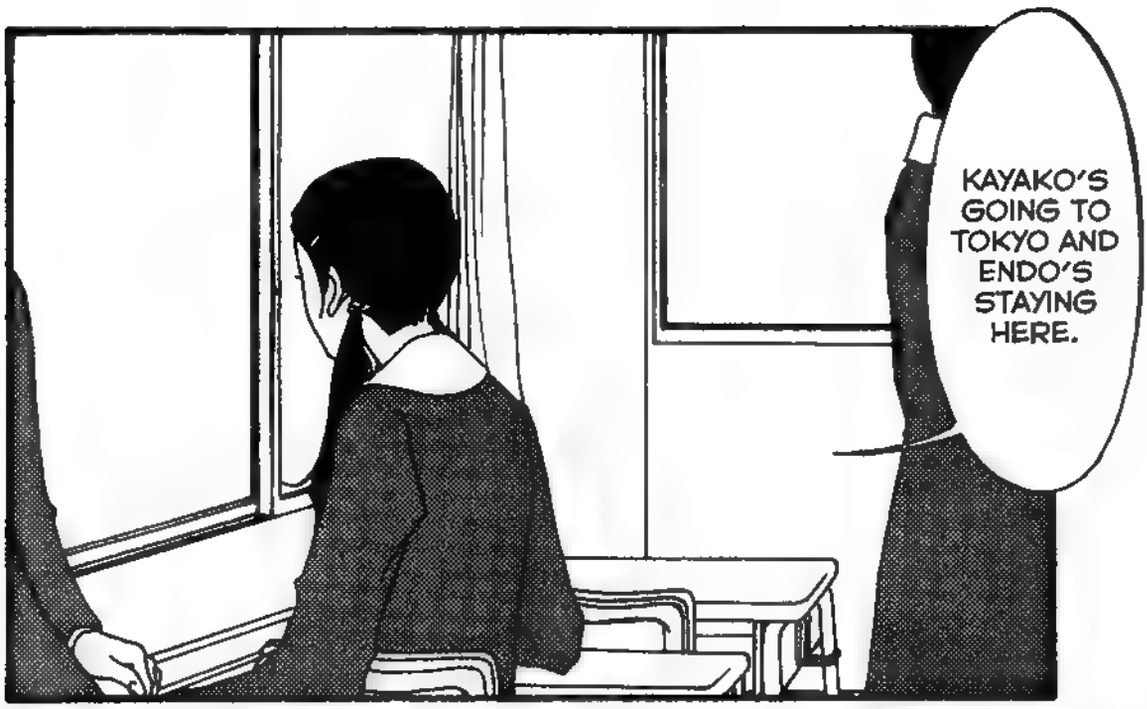


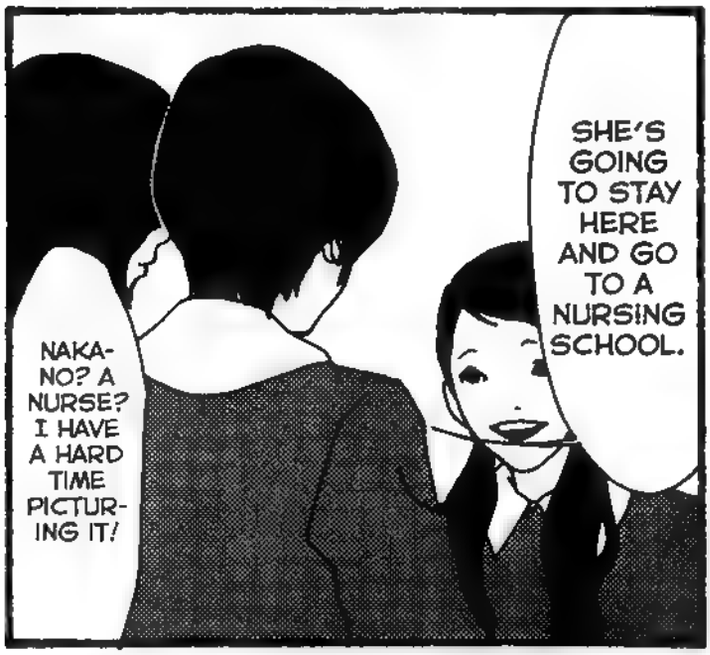

HAHAHA! THAT'S HILARIOUS! I'M SORRY! YOU REALLY LOOK BAD IN IT!
WHAT AN AWFUL PHOTO. WHO CHOSE IT? I LOOK AWFUL!
DO YOU WANT TO WRITE SOME-THING?
WHAT IS IT, A SOUVE-NIR BOOK?
YOU NOTICE? MORISHITA WAS CRYING!
I NOTICED THAT SHE LOOKED ODD. SHE WAS CRYING?
IT'S GOING TO BE WITH YOU FOR YOUR WHOLE LIFE. WRITE SOMETHING NICE.
SHE'S NUTS!
STOP IT! QUIT ACTING DUMB!

EVERYONE'S TALKING TO HER!
SHE'S INTIMIDATED, IT'S FUNNY!
COME, COME!

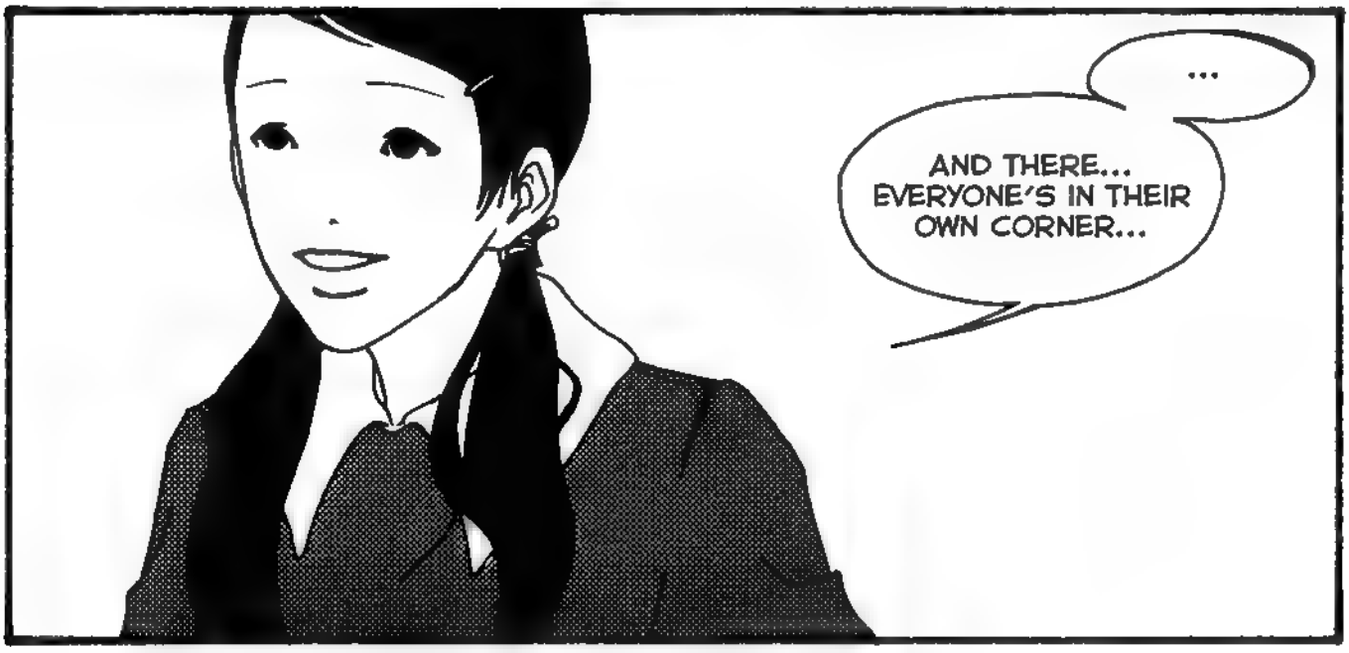

NAKANO, SINCE WE'RE HERE, COULD WE TAKE A PICTURE WITH YOU?
YOU KNOW, A LOT OF PEOPLE ADMIRE YOU IN OUR CLASS, NAKANO.
A LOT OF PEOPLE REALLY LIKED WATCHING YOU IN THE BASKETBALL CLUB!
THERE, THERE!
YOU SEE HER?
HIHIHI!
SHHHH!

UHH...
THANKS!
AND...
ENJOY THE GLORY DAYS, NAKANO!
HA HA HA!
HI HI!
COME ON, YOU GUYS COME IN THE PICTURE TOO!
WHAT ARE YOU ALL LOOKING AT ME LIKE THAT FOR?
NAKANO, DESTROYER OF HEARTS!
HAHAHA!


KAYAKO'S GOING TO TOKYO AND ENDO'S STAYING HERE.


SHE'S GOING TO STAY HERE AND GO TO A NURSING SCHOOL.
NAKA-NO? A NURSE? I HAVE A HARD TIME PICTUR-ING IT!

I'M GOING TO YAMANASHI.
AND NAKANO?

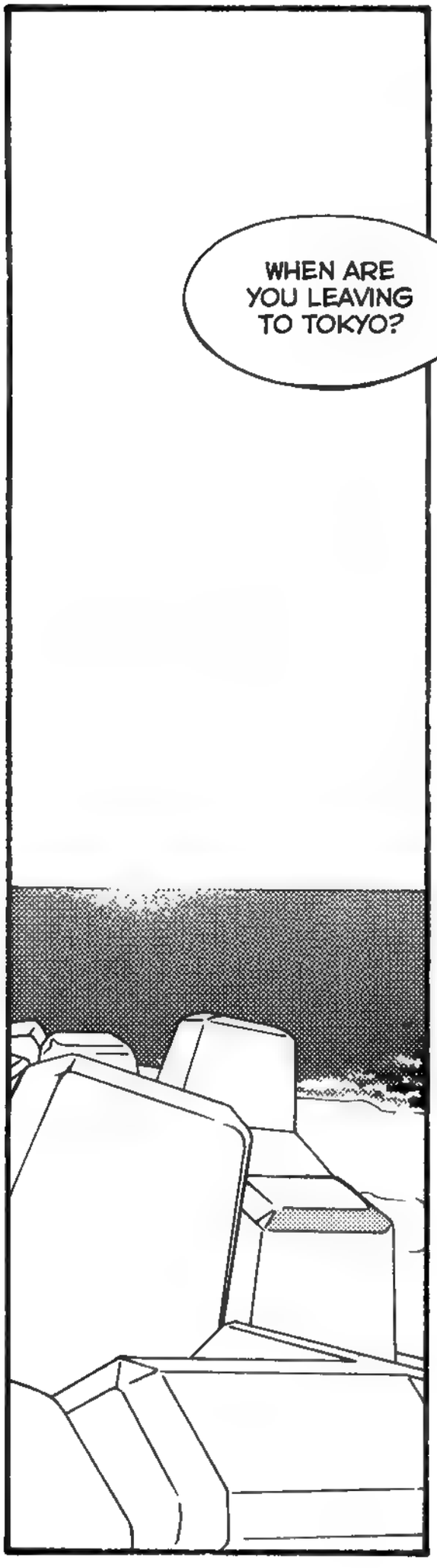

...
AND THERE... EVERYONE'S IN THEIR OWN CORNER...

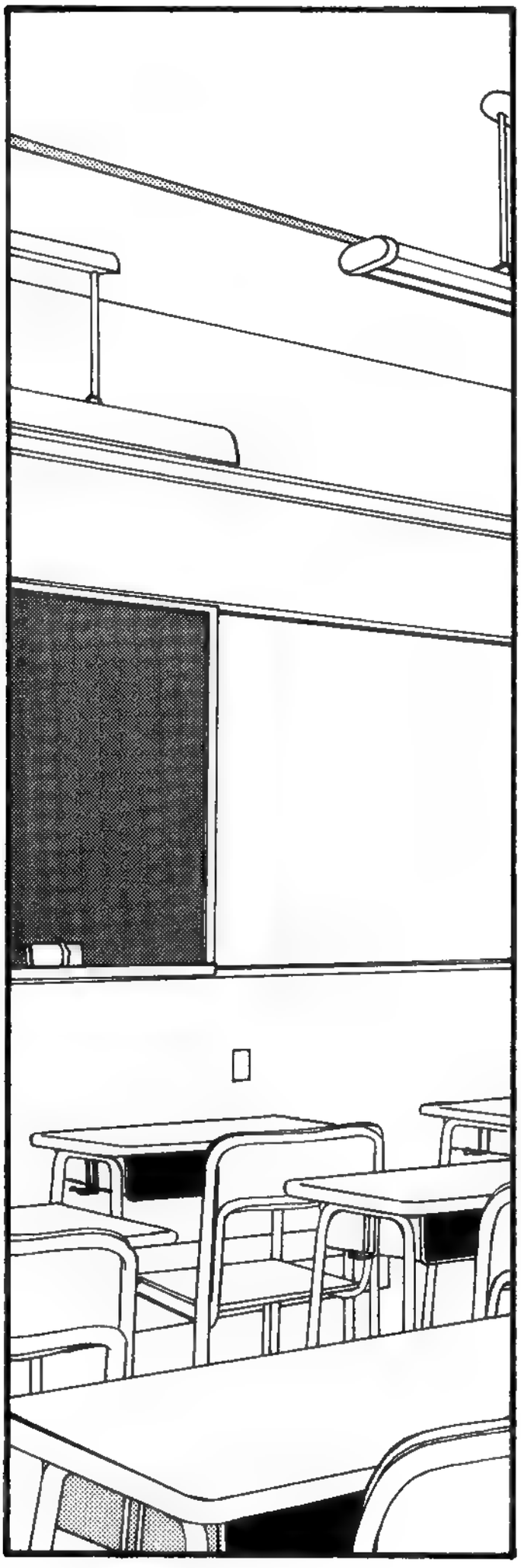
I THINK THAT THE ONE WHO LEAVE WILL ONLY BE INTERESTED IN THE AREAS WHERE THEY'LL BE AT.
AND THEN... EVEN FOR THE ONES WHO'LL STAY HERE, IT'LL BE A WHOLE NEW LIFE.
THEY SAY THAT FRIENDS FROM HIGH SCHOOL STAY FRIENDS FOR-EVER...
DO YOU THINK SO?

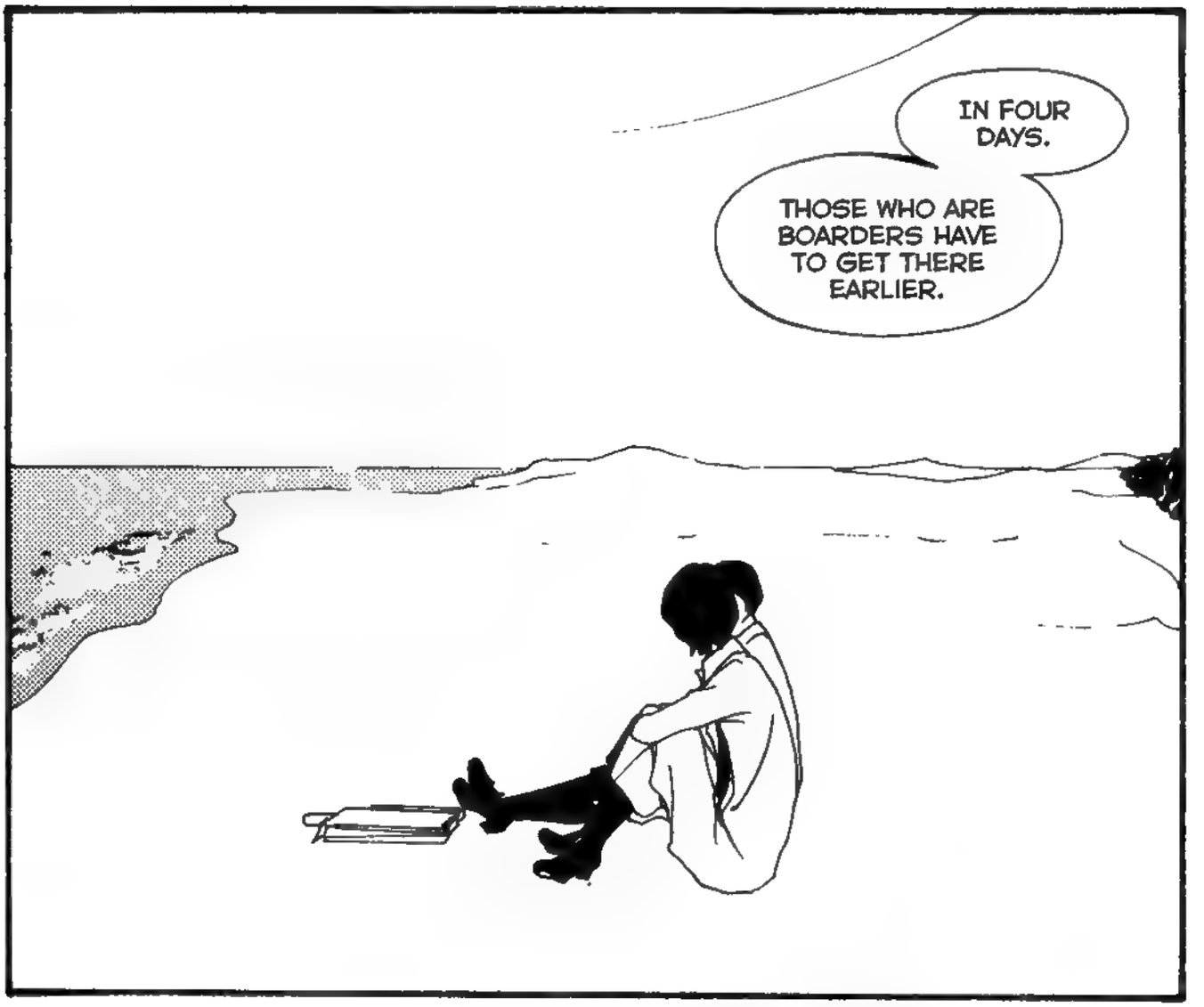
RIGHT NOW, WE'RE COMFORTABLE TOGETHER, BUT SOON ALL OF THIS WILL SEEM SO FAR AWAY.

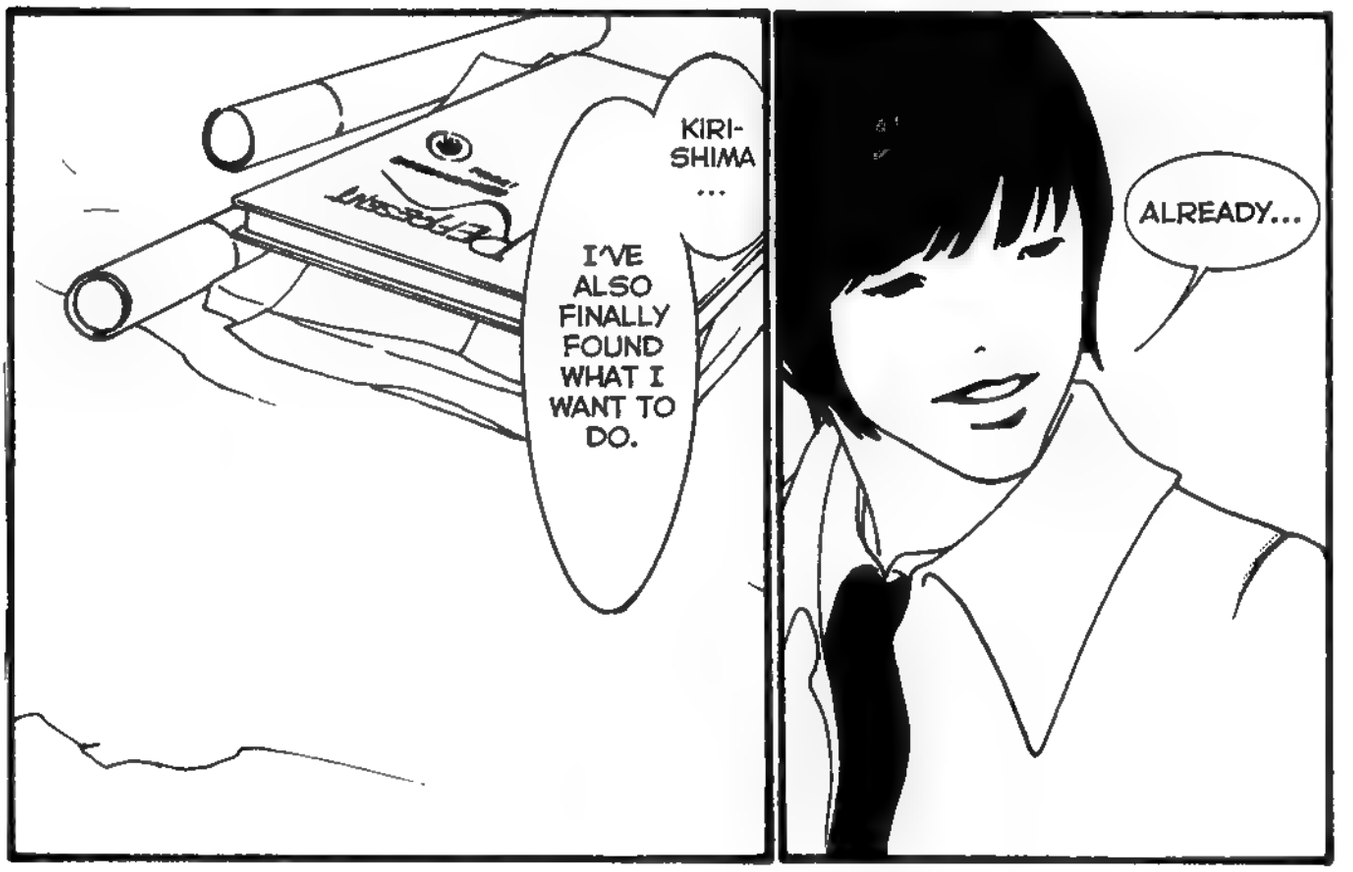
IF WE'D SEE EACH OTHER IN A FEW YEARS, WE WON'T HAVE ANY-THING TO TELL EACH OTHER...
I'M UNDER THE IM-PRESSION THAT WE'LL REALLY DRIFT AWAY FROM EACH OTHER.

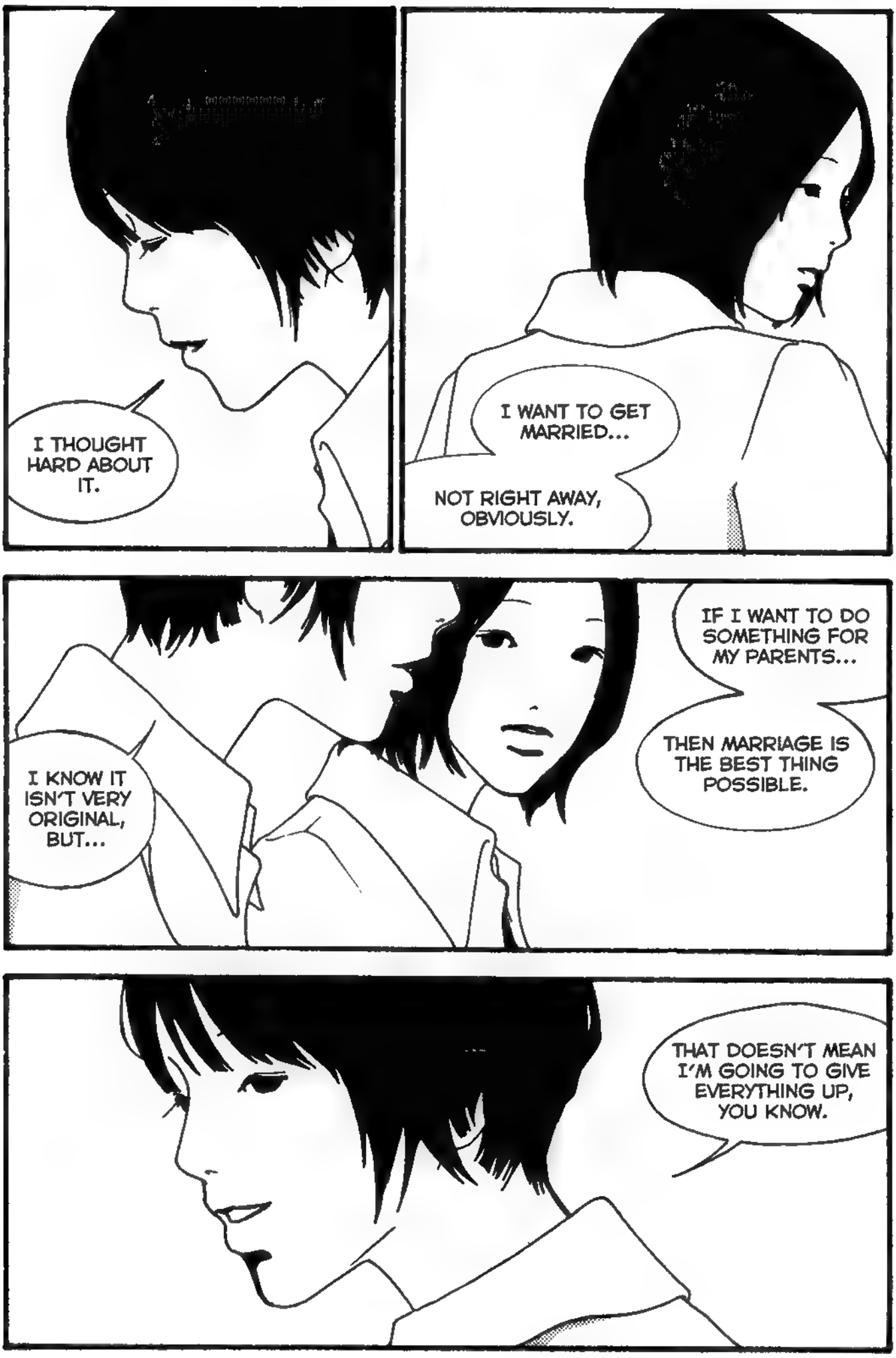
HERE, A PEN.
WHAT THE HECK IS THIS!? WHO DREW THAT?
WATANABE, AND YOU TOO, WRITE SOMETHING.
OKAY, THEN, WHAT SHOULD I WRITE?
WRITE SOMETHING EMOTIVE!
I'M NOT VERY GOOD WITH THOSE KIND OF THINGS!
HAHA! IT WAS MATSU!
AH! HER! I TOLD HER TO DO SOMETHING ELSE, BUT SHE DREW A NAKED BOY, HER SPECIALITY!

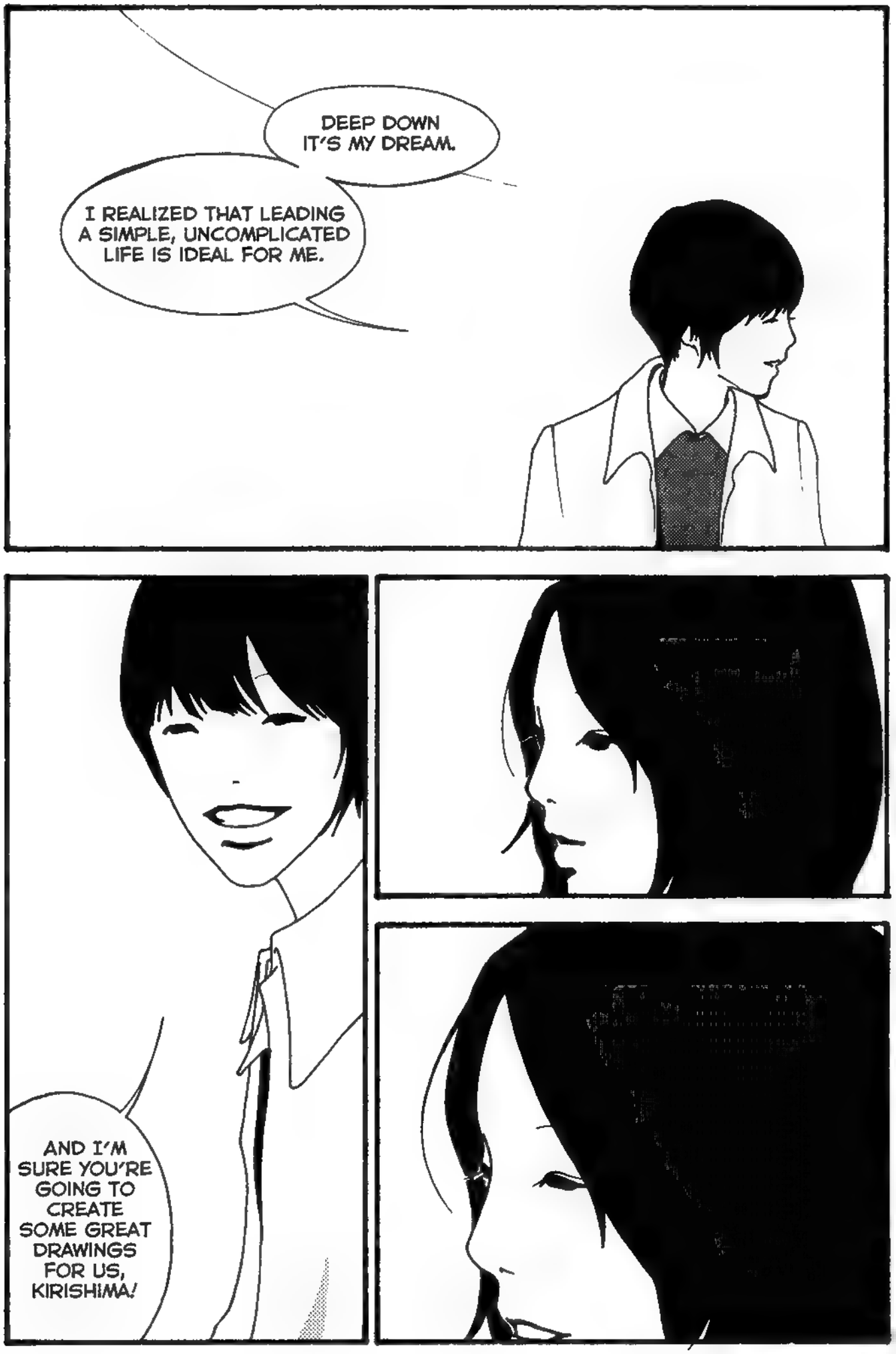

WHEN ARE YOU LEAVING TO TOKYO?

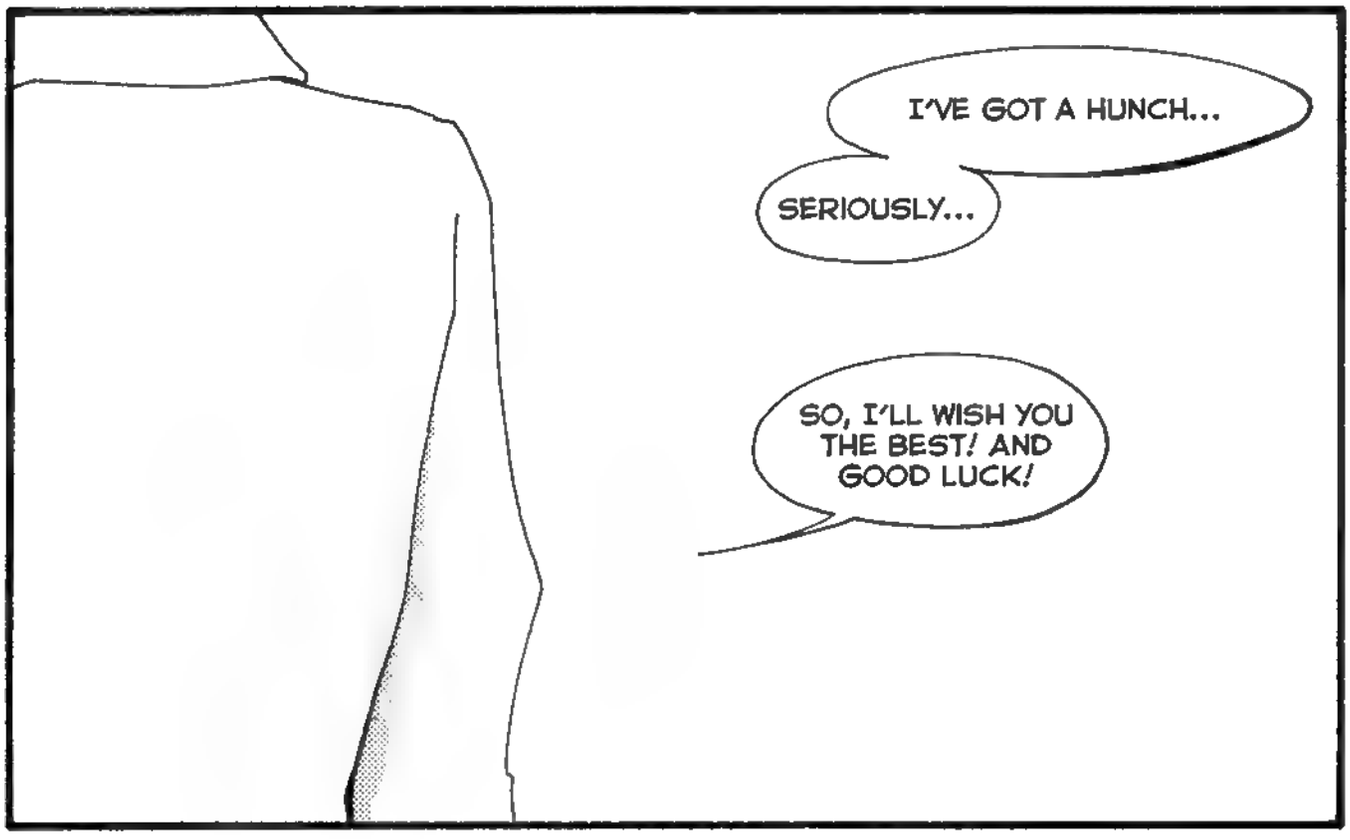


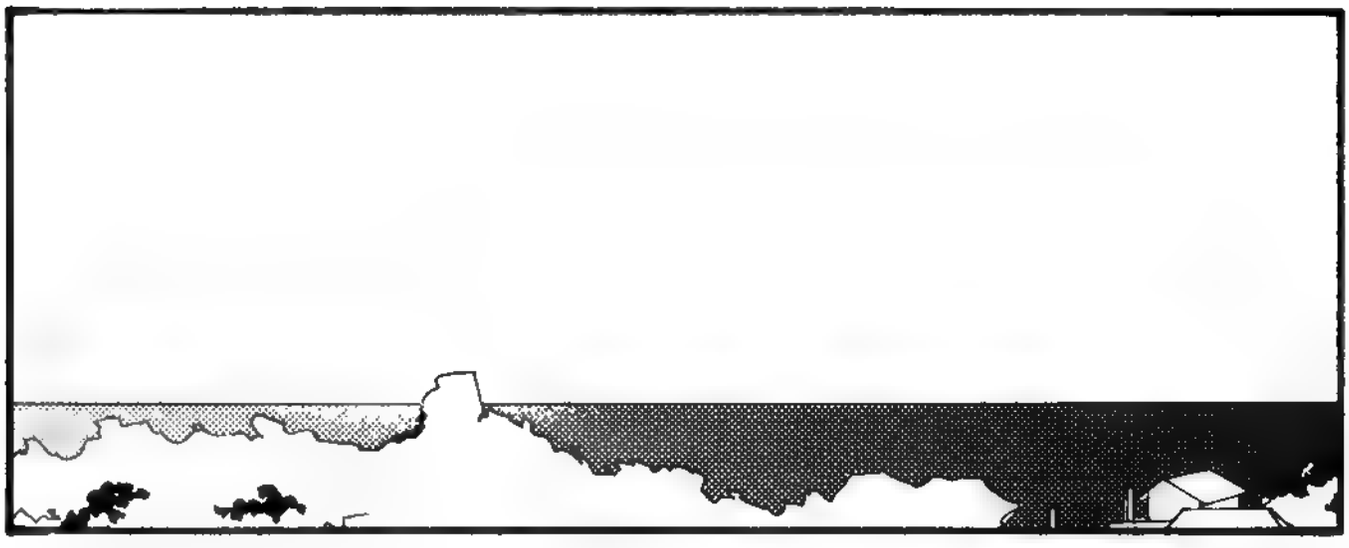

IN FOUR DAYS.
THOSE WHO ARE BOARDERS HAVE TO GET THERE EARLIER.

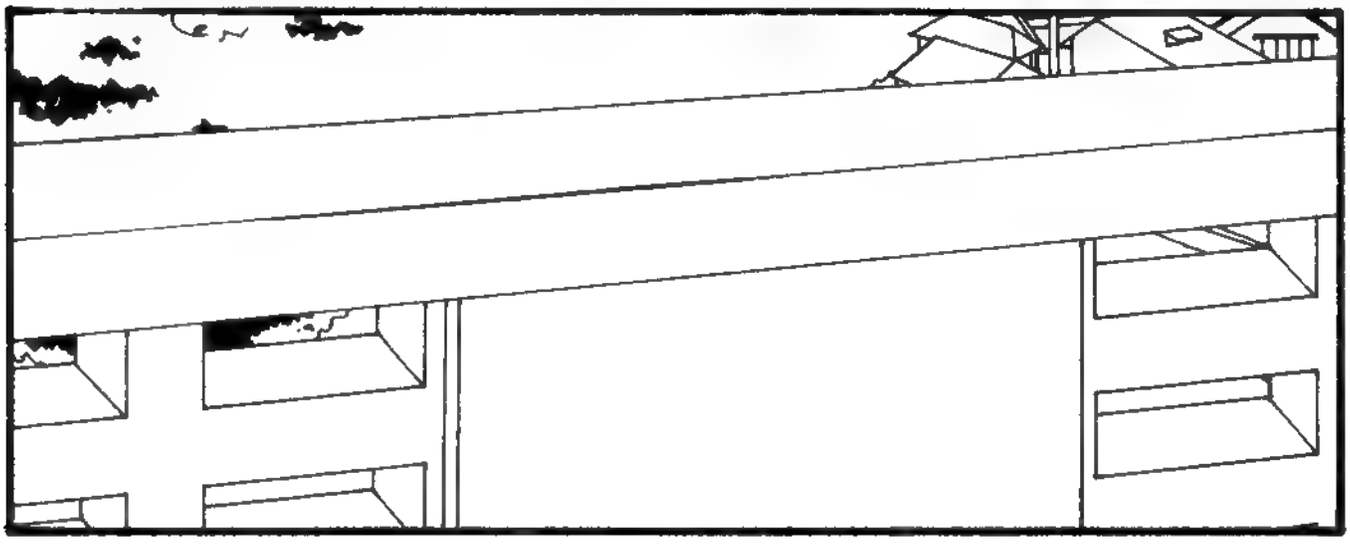

KIRI-SHIMA ...
I'VE ALSO FINALLY FOUND WHAT I WANT TO DO.
ALREADY...

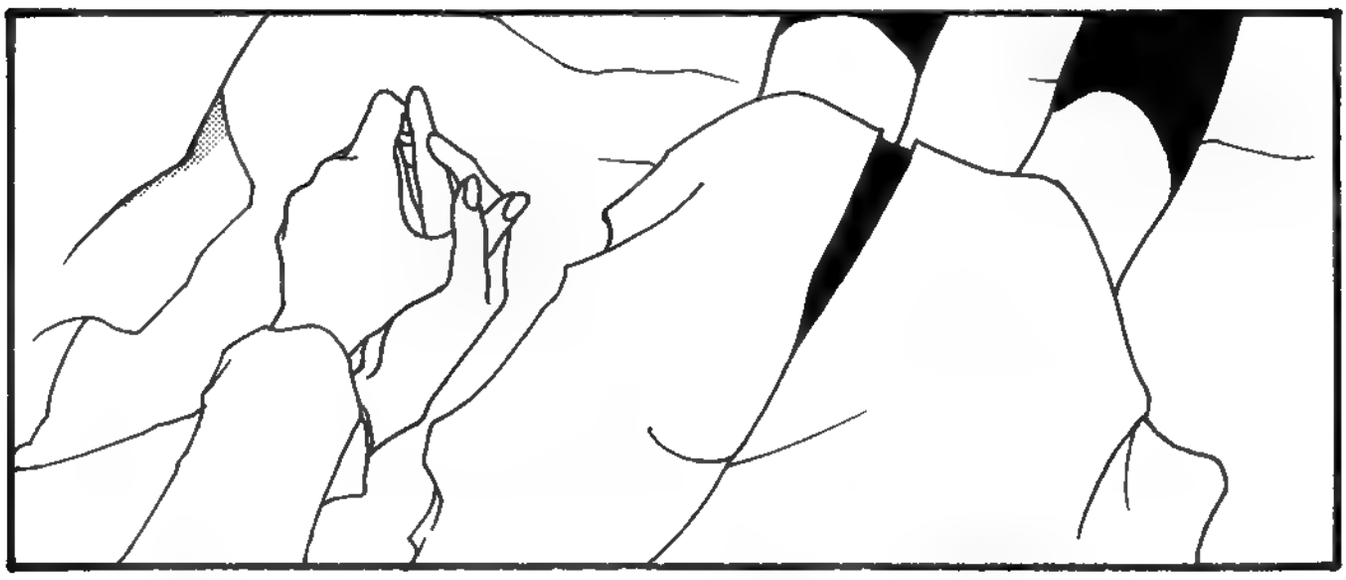

I THOUGHT HARD ABOUT IT.
I WANT TO GET MARRIED...
NOT RIGHT AWAY, OBVIOUSLY.
I KNOW IT ISN'T VERY ORIGINAL, BUT...
IF I WANT TO DO SOMETHING FOR MY PARENTS...
THEN MARRIAGE IS THE BEST THING POSSIBLE.
THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'M GOING TO GIVE EVERYTHING UP, YOU KNOW.


DEEP DOWN IT'S MY DREAM.
I REALIZED THAT LEADING A SIMPLE, UNCOMPLICATED LIFE IS IDEAL FOR ME.
AND I'M SURE YOU'RE GOING TO CREATE SOME GREAT DRAWINGS FOR US, KIRISHIMA!


I'VE GOT A HUNCH...
SERIOUSLY...
SO, I'LL WISH YOU THE BEST! AND GOOD LUCK!

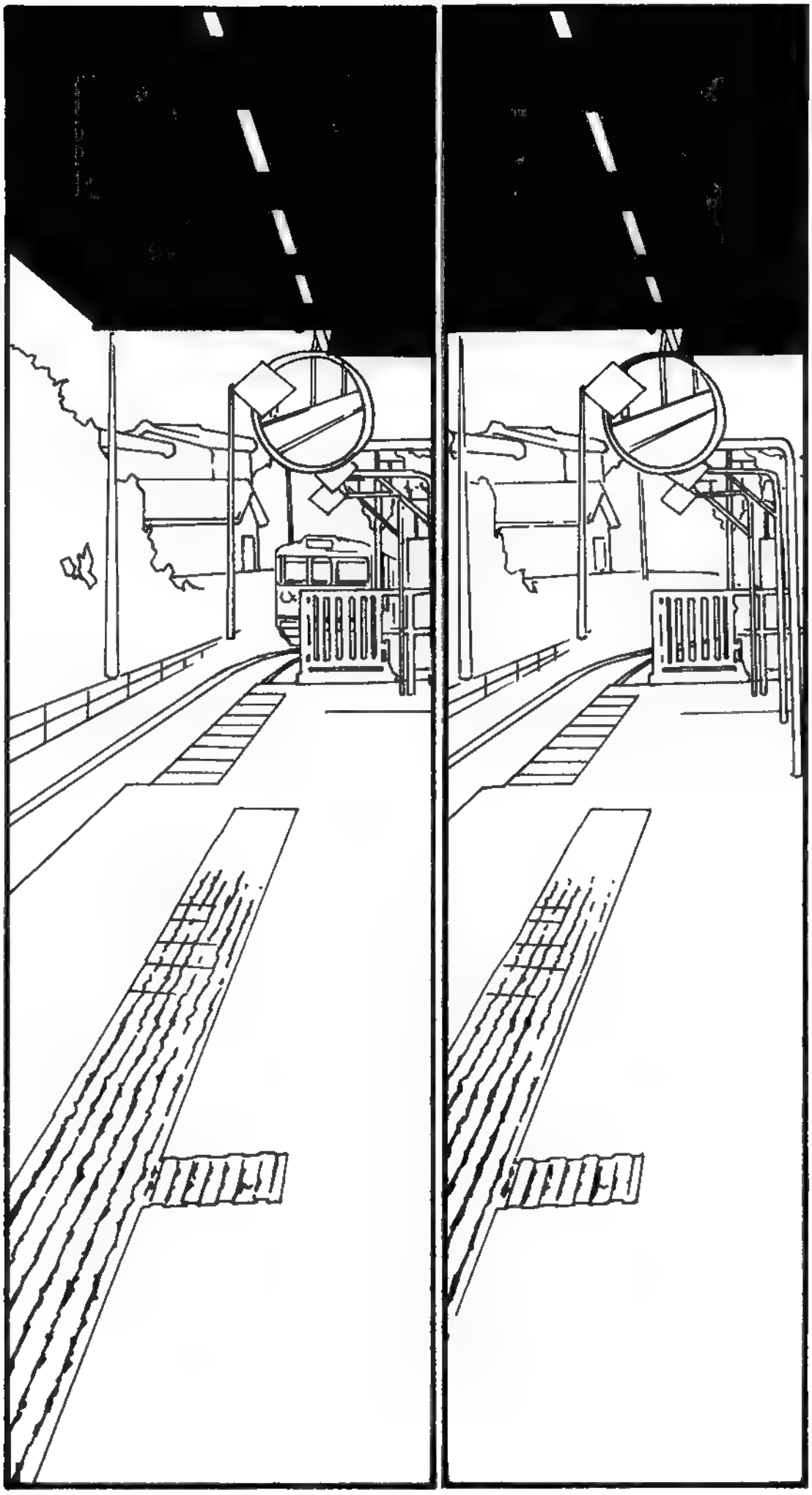


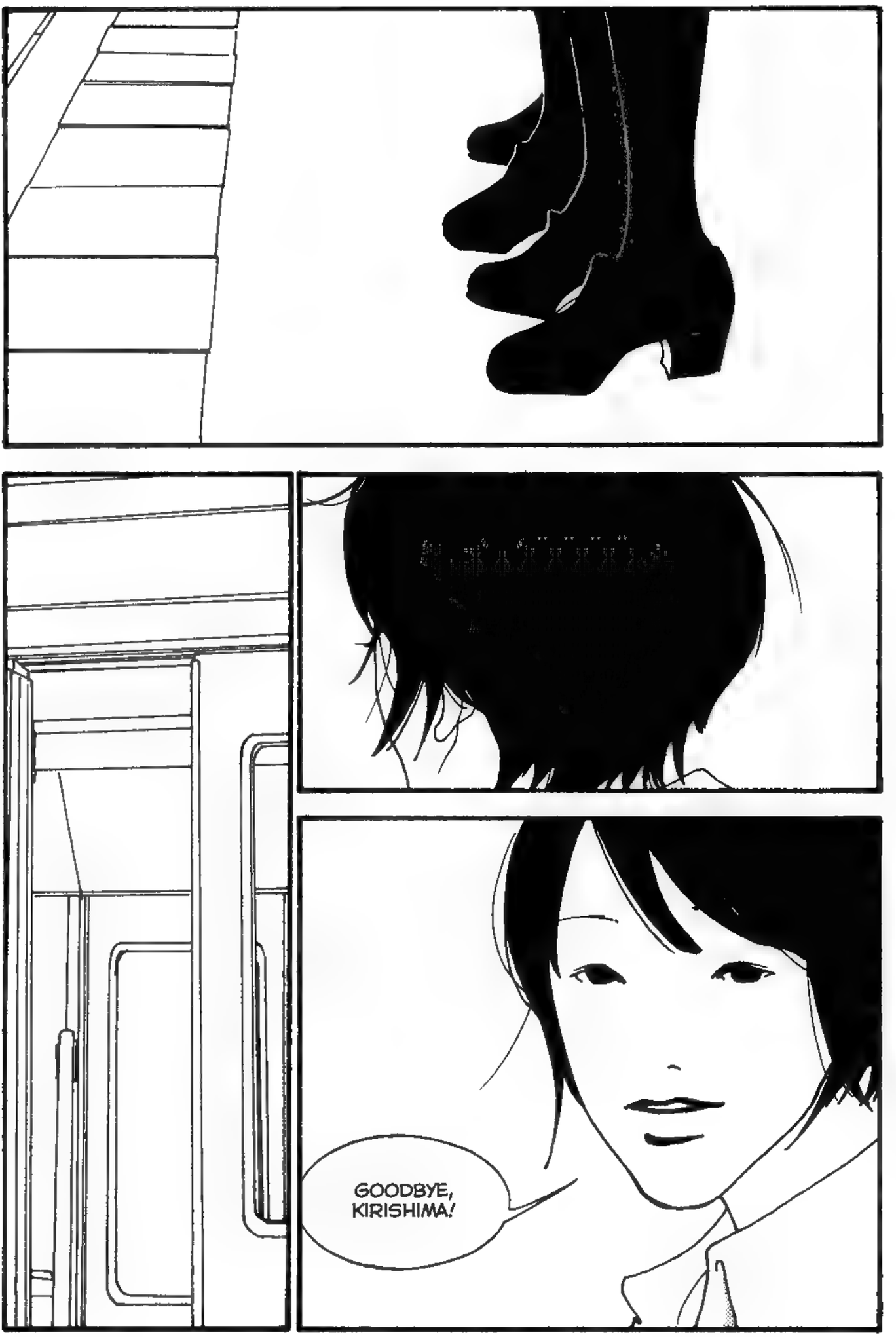




IF YOU'RE A BOARDER...
YOU'LL MAKE A LOT OF FRIENDS.

KIRISHIMA...
I KNOW THAT...
YOU'LL FORGET ALL OF THIS VERY QUICKLY!

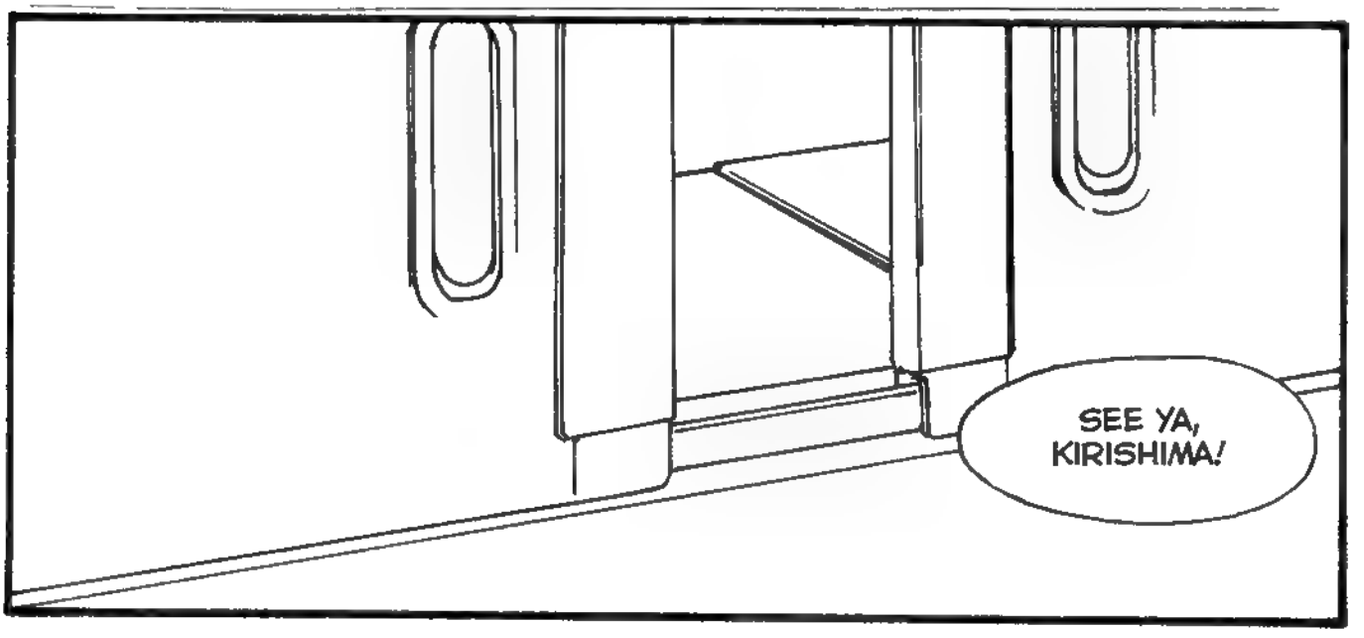


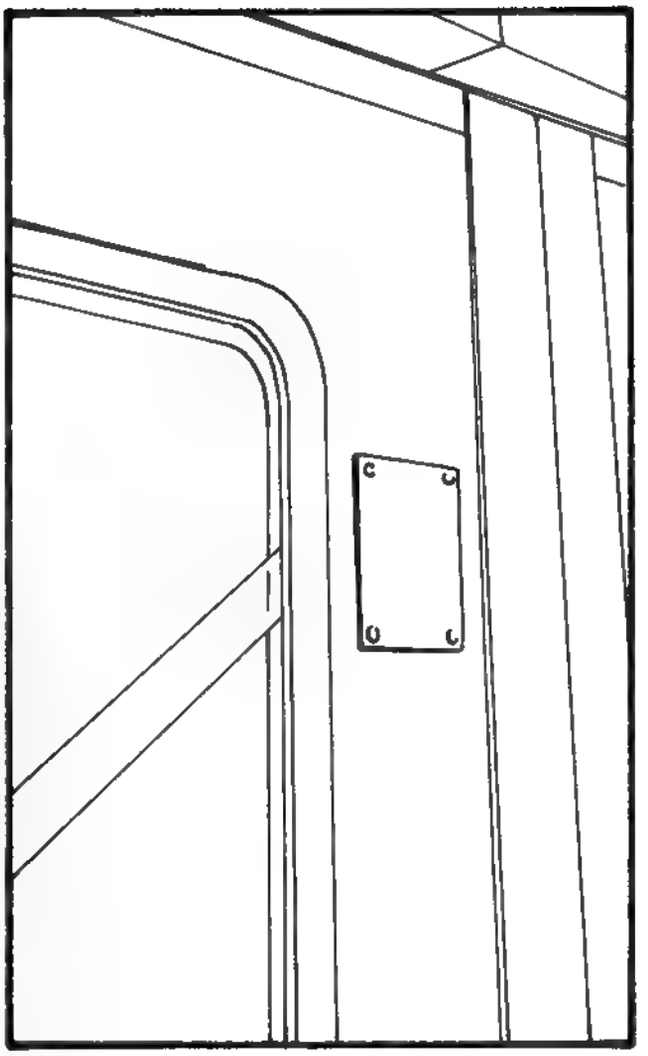

GOODBYE, KIRISHIMA!

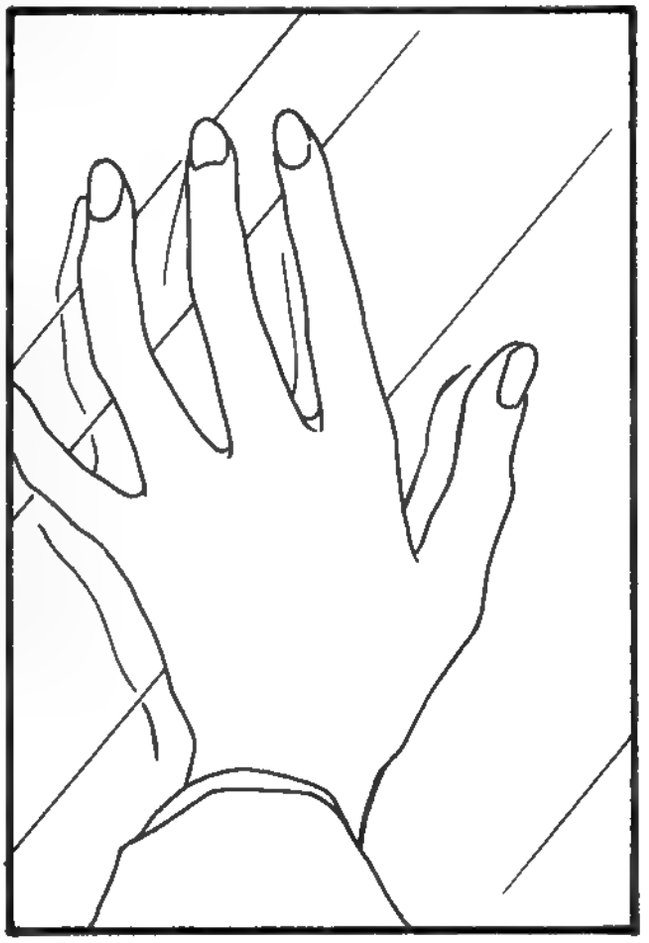
MASAMI!

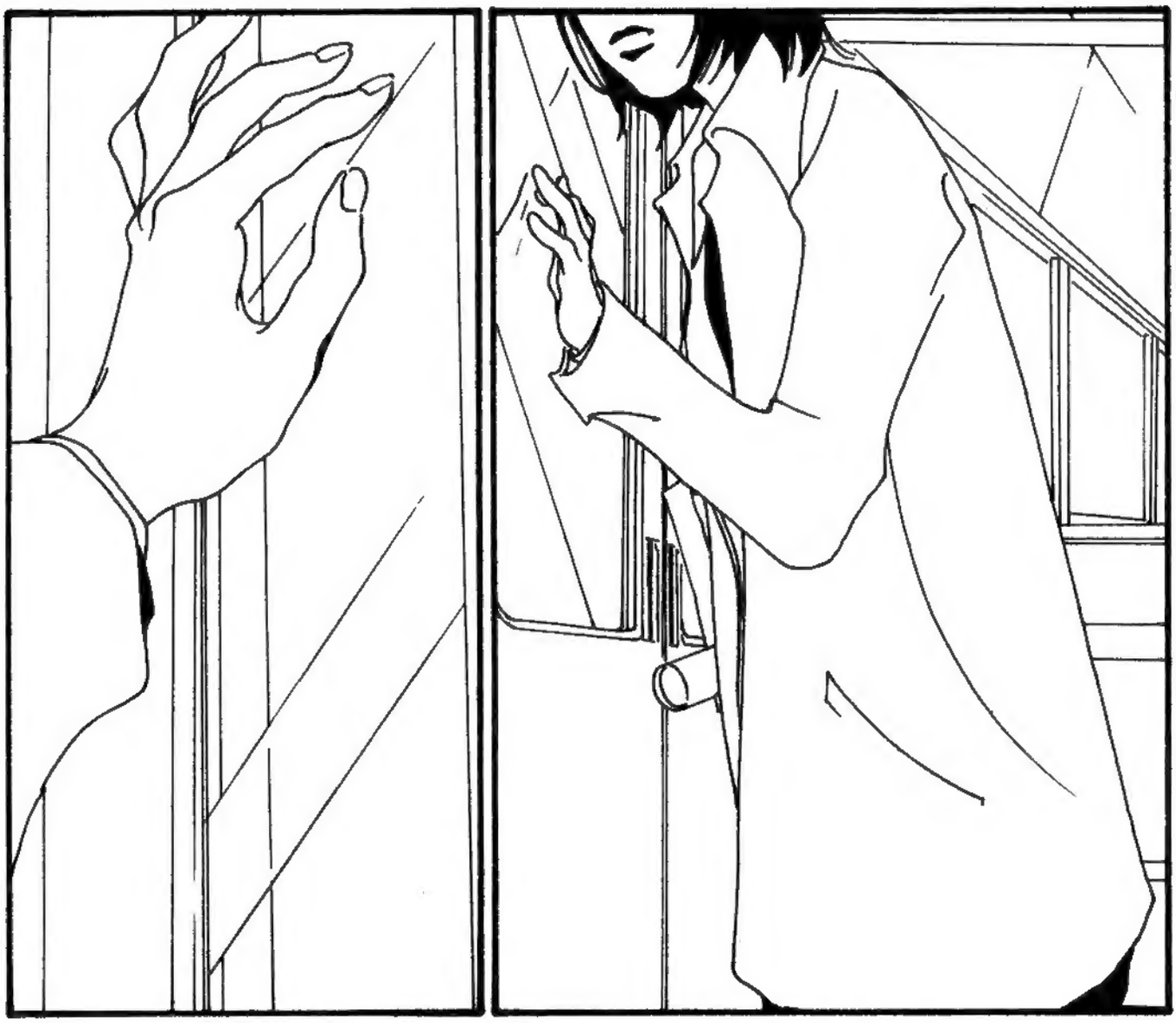
MASAMI, I THINK THAT...
I'LL NEVER, EVER FORGET YOU.

MAYBE...


SEE YA, KIRISHIMA!







"Say, Kirishima!"

"Kirishima..."

Fin